

Unemployment

Because of the rising cost of production and the rising cost of operation of hospitals, together with the general rise in prices everywhere, our provinces, and particularly our municipalities throughout Canada, are finding it more difficult to carry out their responsibilities at the local level. Rather than remit those taxes to private enterprise, such as the government did in 1947 to the tune of \$460 million in revenue, when they cut off the excess profits tax, the government should reimpose those taxes. It has been said that private enterprise needs more incentive to make more profits to be in a position to put our people to work. I am one who is convinced that you will never have full employment in this country without public enterprise and public money going into those projects which will make this a better country in which to live.

In the farming industry we have experienced a severe set-back during the past year. I say to the Minister of Labour and to the government that while unemployment insurance will perhaps help those people who have had jobs and who qualify for unemployment insurance, it will not help many of our agricultural workers and other common labourers who do not come under the unemployment insurance scheme. If those people have to depend upon the kind of relief we had in the 1930's, then of course you can understand, Mr. Speaker, the hardship that will be involved in that type of situation.

I am hoping that what I have said will have some effect on this government. We have sat in this house listening and waiting for some proposals to come from the other side which would confirm the fact that they were prepared to meet this situation head on with a program which would give us some answer to the serious unemployment problem. We are disturbed, and I am disturbed over the fact that in addition to the people who are unemployed, many of our people who have little or no incomes, such as the old age pensioners, are, owing to the higher cost of production and the higher cost of living, worse off today than they were in 1939. I do not think this is satisfactory. I believe the government should increase old age pensions so that our older citizens may be able to live decently. It would help to satisfy many of these people.

As farmers in this country, we want our food eaten; we want it to be made useful to the hungry people of the world. I have often heard the Minister of Agriculture say that the farmers' best customer is the Canadian people. Let us make them our best customer for our farm products. Let us have a program under which our older people will have adequate incomes and jobs so they can sit

down to their tables well laden with the products of our farms, butter, pork, cheese, beef, eggs and everything else. If we achieve that goal we shall have a better situation than we have today. We know that many of these 600,000 people cannot get the kind of living they are entitled to in this country. What I am saying in effect is that this government is washed up. I was going to use a stronger expression, Mr. Speaker. We are not satisfied that this is petty criticism of the government.

I came here after the last election quite prepared to listen to anything the government had to say after being returned by the electors of this country. If they had a program that could guarantee us full employment, that could guarantee the farmers farm security and could guarantee the workers job security, I was quite prepared to listen to what they had to say and to support their program. Since that time the situation has been getting worse and worse, and they do nothing except sit in their places and belittle what we say from this side of the house. If they have better programs, I shall be quite happy to listen, but we just do not want to make this whole matter frivolous. It is quite serious.

Some hon. members are saying that I have taken 40 minutes. It may seem like 40 minutes to them, I do not know. I do not mind one bit whether they like it or not. I am trying to put forth what I think can be a program for the Canadian people. Our people in this country, rich in resources and rich in men and women ready to work, are not prepared once again to go back into the hungry 1930's or anything like that. We believe the challenge is great today. If we are fighting anything we are fighting an idealistic war, a cold war or a hot war.

I have often heard members across the way talk about communism. If we are to fight communism we have to fight it with an idealism that is going to be better than theirs, with an economic philosophy, with a social philosophy and, if you like, with a spiritual philosophy that is better than theirs.

It is not sufficient, Mr. Speaker, just to cat-call. It is not going to be sufficient simply to try to belittle the ideas of others. We will first have to have a positive program in this country. We will have to put our own house in order before we go across the seas and try to cram down the throats of other people the idea that we have the best system in the world.

I believe the democracy we have in this country, fortunately, is not necessarily tied to capitalism or free enterprise. There are social and economic orders in other countries, such