

me to say how gladly we in this corner will accept that invitation and cooperate to the fullest extent in our power in that good work. Coming into this house as we do, holding many views which are not held by some members, we have at least this in common: we are here for the definite purpose of offering, and of giving the fullest possible cooperation in any matter of this kind when it is in our power so to do. Without going into details—for this is hardly the time or the place to discuss details as to the management of the work—I need only say, speaking for ourselves, and on behalf of the suffering farmers we represent, that we appreciate the recognition of the situation which has been manifested in the helpful and encouraging attitude of the Prime Minister, and we shall be glad now and at any time to give our cooperation and assistance with a view to having these good wishes carried into effect.

Mr. J. S. WOODSWORTH (Winnipeg North Centre): As representing a group, even though a very small group, in this house, I feel bound to say a word in regard to unemployment. It was very satisfactory indeed to learn that the Prime Minister intends to give us a statement before the close of this session with regard to this important matter. I would just urge one thing—the urgency of the need. Possibly some of us who have been very closely connected with the unemployed realize their needs more fully than some others, and I would point out that an absolute demoralization is taking place at the present time across this country. It seems to me that work ought to be provided—remunerative work—in the immediate future, and I would welcome any such suggestion as that made by the leader of the opposition, that an emergency committee be appointed at once and relief works of a constructive nature on a large scale undertaken without delay, so that a large number of transients might be taken off the road and that the homes of the people might not be broken up, which is a real danger at the present time.

Mr. BENNETT: May I point out that the policy suggested by the right hon. gentleman who leads the opposition is one that involves questions of very great legal magnitude. These difficulties have become extremely grave by reason of recent decisions of the privy council. The method suggested is one that has been engaging the attention of the government for the last few months, and my right hon. friend is perfectly correct when he says that no doubt this matter has suggested itself to the government. It has.

But I should like the attention of the ex-Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) and of those members of this house who are of the legal profession, and I ask them to reflect for a moment just what our powers may be in dealing with matters that are primarily within the jurisdiction of the provinces. The late Lord Haldane observed that the provinces were quasi-sovereign entities, and in dealing with questions of relief we can do so only at the request and with the consent of the provinces affected. But, this not being war time, when we endeavour to appoint a committee which would have jurisdiction to enforce its edicts or its will, there is a constitutional difficulty of the first magnitude. And the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth) has just touched upon the fringe of one of them. What about those who, offered work, will not take it but demand that they be maintained? That has happened already. I am bound to say that in my judgment it is part of a studied propaganda that does not emanate within Canada. But that is not a matter of importance at the moment. If any hon. gentleman within sound of my voice, who has given thought to this matter, has any suggestion to make and will send it to me either by note or otherwise, it will be greatly appreciated. For just how the forces may be coordinated and sufficient power vested in a central body to see that the policies and conclusions arrived at are made effective is a matter that is certainly not free from great doubt.

The Minister of Justice has been giving it careful consideration and attention for weeks. I pointed out, in answer to one of my hon. friends yesterday, that one of the provinces had said it required no assistance in dealing with the problem of unemployment. With respect to the making of grants, there is no difficulty; with respect to the controlling of their administration, there is considerable difficulty. The extent to which a committee set up by this parliament to function in every province, except under conditions that might make its operations more or less useless, is a matter that might engage the attention of many of our friends. One of my friends, when I discussed it with him, said, "The answer is simple: no one will object". Well, knowing as I do something of what is transpiring in Canada, I am perfectly certain that not only will objections be registered but that action will be taken that will involve the expression of opinions by courts. And courts must administer the law regardless of the fact that emergencies exist, unless parliament makes a declaration of a character which it