

sideration of my country when I shall be called upon to-morrow, to bear the crushing burden of these debts, to sacrifice myself and my own people in order to repay them?"

The youth of my country has the right to demand the right of being heard, and the right of being understood. Therefore, I wish to state that if every economic, financial, physical and agricultural domain is represented in this parliament by a department which animates, supports and develops it, why should youth, the very soul of all the domains of human activity, be not also represented by its own department? I demand to-night the setting up of a federal department of youth.

Various departments were set up to finance or prosecute the war; departments were created to solve post-war problems. At this momentous hour we are about to face, an hour which is rightly dreaded by economists, why should the government not institute the department which, in my opinion, is the most important for the salvation of the country: the department of youth. This department would render such important services that they would have results and repercussions in every cell of the social organism. If you do not create it, you are hampering the welfare of the country. If you create it, you will make the nation strong and solid. One may answer that such a step comes within the jurisdiction of the provinces and that the federal government does not wish to encroach upon the rights of the provinces. This is a very easy and convenient excuse. The Department of National War Services was set up, and it mobilized the youth. The Department of National Defence was given a larger strength, and youth filled it up. Selective service was instituted, and youth was the first to submit to its requirements. In selective service, a mobilization section was set up, and again youth was its first and perpetual victim. Therefore, if it has borne the stiffness of our laws to a greater extent than any other class of society, it has a vested right in requesting and demanding the introduction of legislation, acceptable both by itself and by the provinces, which legislation would be the official and national recognition of its devotion and of its social helpfulness.

How can we assist youth? Young men who have been to war deserve special attention. Indeed, when the war is over, numerous laws will be enacted to assist those who have contributed to victory. But those who will apply these laws should not neglect or deal unjustly with these young people merely because they are young; the youth who fought this war and who will be its victims, who entered in

[M. L. Bertrand.]

it voluntarily or through the force of circumstances, will set forth its rightful requests, even if it has to resort to arbitrary means. Is it excessive to ask that youth that has fought this war be given an organism whose duty will be, when needs arise, to protect its rightful claims, or to facilitate its obtaining a just preference in employment.

There is also the youth under twenty, at eighteen already much older than its age, since it is by statute sent to the army before it is physically developed and ready to fight for its living. There are all those who are growing up, already restless at sixteen, and all those who have not yet reached sixteen, and who are acquiring deep in their hearts, when their elders relate their experiences, feelings of contempt and sour memories which they will undoubtedly retain, unless such feelings are dispelled.

Mr. HOMUTH: I rise to a point of order. I dislike doing this very much, but hon. members have been warned against reading their speeches. The hon. member for Terrebonne is reading his speech, word for word. I object to it, and I do not think it should be allowed.

Mr. RALSTON: The hon. member for York-Sunbury (Mr. Hanson) read his speech.

Mr. HOMUTH: You should have checked him up, then.

Mr. RALSTON: Why did you not check him up?

Mr. HOMUTH: Because it is your duty to do it.

Mr. RALSTON: I was not objecting to it.

Mr. HOMUTH: I am.

Mr. RALSTON: Why did you not object to the hon. member for York-Sunbury, then?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): Charity begins at home.

Mr. BERTRAND (Terrebonne): This coming youth, the government can assist it in many ways:

(a) By setting up, in every district where an unemployment insurance office is located, a section specially devoted to the placement of youth.

(b) By expanding without restrictions the professional training programme, which recently replaced the war-time emergency training programme; by giving substantial grants to provinces so that arts and crafts schools can be accessible, not only to students from towns and cities, but also to those from rural municipalities of the least importance.