

council to study distribution, purchasing power, exchange and the unemployment question. That motion was agreed to but nothing was done. Once more we introduced a resolution on unemployment urging the reduction of the hours of labour. This as other similar resolutions was negated by the government of which the ex-Minister of Trade and Commerce was still a member. We introduced a motion on banking, currency and credit, which was talked out. I myself had the honour of introducing that year the first motion that I presented to this house on the cooperative commonwealth, our plan for dealing with the problems that face us. It was talked out. In that same year we had a subamendment to the budget calling for the nationalization of our finance, which was defeated. We had another motion on unemployment, an amendment on going into supply, which was of course negated.

In the next year I again introduced a motion on the cooperative commonwealth and the Conservatives brought in a motion adjourning the debate, thus effectively preventing a full discussion of that question.

While I do not want to be too severe on the ex-Minister of Trade and Commerce, for I think we all recognize that there is more joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth than over the ninety and nine—

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Even if the repentance is qualified.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Yes; at the same time I do say that it is not fair of the ex-minister to speak as he did to-day, as if an earnest effort had not been made to bring these matters before the house, and as if during that period he had not been a member of the government that negated these efforts of ours. We also brought in a motion dealing with debts and with the whole question of economic conditions.

In 1933 the hon. member for Macleod brought in one of his numerous amendments to the Interest Act. In 1934 there was a motion for the national control of credit and finance; our cooperative commonwealth motion again, and on this occasion the debate was adjourned, which killed the discussion. We also brought up the question of unemployment relief, and the resolution still stood on the order paper at the end of the session, so again we did not get the fullest discussion. We brought in a motion on the nationalization of insurance, a motion to control credit, and an amendment to distribute the abundance that we had. In 1934 there was an

amendment of ours to provide a stable currency and credit system based on goods and services; and so on.

I need not mention the motions and amendments of this year, but I have mentioned some of those of preceding years just to show that during the time the ex-Minister of Trade and Commerce was a member of the cabinet we persistently urged the very reforms that he is urging to-day.

The ex-Minister of Trade and Commerce advanced the idea to-day that the government should be in the position of referee. He says that he is not opposed to capitalism but simply to the evils of capitalism, and he is out to champion the small business men against unscrupulous corporations. Well, I congratulate him on having come pretty nearly to the traditional Liberal policy, because that is the position they have taken all along, that the government should be simply a policeman to see that there are no fouls on either side and that generally there is fair play, I think the ex-Minister of Trade and Commerce would go further than that and say that there should be definite regulation.

The Prime Minister makes as his defence the statement that the government has done all that it legally may do, and having done so, no good citizen should criticize the government. Of course that is a begging of the whole question. No one wants to criticize if the government has done all it should do, but that is the very point at issue. The Prime Minister raises the old constitutional question. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the history of all constitutional questions is this, that what at one time was declared unconstitutional has a few years later been declared constitutional. We had an illustration of that a few days ago. The Prime Minister told us that it was not within his power to interfere with the march of the British Columbia relief camp strikers, that he could not interfere unless he was asked to do so by the provincial government, but three or four days later this government gave orders for the police to stop the marchers in Saskatchewan, and that in spite of the protests of the premier of Saskatchewan. What was unconstitutional one week became quite constitutional the next.

Going back three or four years to the days of the blank cheque, we found that under peace, order and good government, or under the special provisions introduced at that time, it was quite possible under unemployment relief legislation to assist the banks and insurance companies. They were given help by being allowed to write up their assets.