

admit that even after such a postponement he would still be opposed to unemployment insurance. This being so, what would be the use, in his case, of waiting for one, two, or three years? To do so would bring him no nearer to seeing any advantage in such a scheme as that brought forward in 1935, which he then condemned, or the present one, which he now condemns.

We all recognize that when the \$100 has vanished someone will have to come to the rescue. And the employers will be large contributors. I admit that under the insurance scheme they will receive no direct return for their outlay. Nevertheless they stand to gain enormously. The depression from 1929 to 1940 hit them very hard. They have had the experience of the last ten years. Unemployment affects the purchasing power of the people, and of necessity the wheels of industry slow down. Dividends are reduced or are no longer declared. After ten years of depression we are now making a stupendous war effort, and men are being engaged in war industries to help forward that effort. What will the end of the war mean to Canada? We are at present at the peak of our war activity. Is not this a time to ask these men to contribute to a protective fund? Should not the employers strain every nerve to meet the impact which will follow the close of the war? If no fund is accumulated during these years when the going is good, wages are high, and thousands and thousands of men, previously unemployed, are at work, it goes without saying that when the war ceases there will be no fund.

If no such fund exists, where shall we be? The State will necessarily intervene as a cushion. Employers represent capital. The capitalists will have to furnish the State, by way of taxes or levies, with the means to meet such a contingency. I had occasion to say at the beginning of the depression, in 1929 or 1930, that capitalism was on trial. It is still on trial. To survive under our system it must assure a subsistence to all. Its tools are human beings who must be taken care of. Should not employers prepare for the inevitable morrow and make the necessary sacrifices now? I would urge the importance of proceeding without delay. I repeat the old saying, "To govern is to foresee."

The advisory committee which is planned under this legislation may suggest to have it modified. I confess that, although we are benefiting by the experience of many countries which have been proceeding ahead of us, we are still in the experimental stage. Modifications may have to come before Parliament next session, and perhaps the session after. But we must take time by the forelock. The organiza-

tion of this scheme may take some months, and I suggest and urge that no time be lost in starting to set up an organization to provide for our unemployed when our war industries stop. We should now ask the employees in stable employment, who do not at the moment see that they stand to gain, to join in without recrimination and help to increase the fund and do their duty towards their neighbour. We should ask the employers, for their own protection, to look forward a little and recognize that it is in their own interest to proceed, although it may seem hard to do so, and, in preparation for the day of reckoning, to put their shoulder to the wheel and help to carry the scheme to fruition.

I move the second reading of the Bill.

Right Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN: Honourable members, this is a piece of legislation not only of front-rank importance, but of a character which calls for thorough, conscientious, and therefore prolonged consideration on our part. It is not merely an authorizing Bill; it is legislation which, if its purpose is proper, is presented to Parliament as it ought to be presented, its principles all plainly expressed, the machinery definitely described, and the whole scheme of operation stated right in the body of the measure. As such, it certainly makes demands upon our attention beyond anything yet presented this session. So far we have had nothing of consequence, save one or two authorizing Bills which really were not legislation at all. This Bill, embodying as it does a subject and a proposal to which this House is peculiarly suited to give adequate and thorough consideration, comes to us about the 1st of August, in about as hot a season as the nation has ever known, and when, necessarily, everyone is in a hurry to retreat from this torrid city.

My first word is to protest against the treatment of this House and of Parliament in general which the presentation of a measure of this character at this time implies. We have been sitting now since the 16th of May, about two and a half months. For a great part of that time this House and its committees, which are its working machinery, have been idle. It was a plain duty, if ever there was one, to initiate this Bill here, and at the beginning or near the beginning of this session. It is only a few days since I reminded the House that in the four sessions when I was, under the late Government, leader of the Senate, we had nineteen bills initiated here. The Employment and Social Insurance Bill of 1935 was not one of those, but it came to us from the other House before the middle of the session, while ample time remained to deal