

In 1939, in the middle of an unemployment crisis, the government did not ask for delays before declaring war. Decisions were taken without hesitation. Let us hope that after the events which have taken place subsequently, our administration will finally understand that it is not normal to leave in destitution courageous people who are quite willing to have a decent living in a country they helped to build.

A convenient way for not worrying about this problem is to try to deny its existence. It is the first reaction one notices among some politicians, and in the press which is at their service. I want to point out the difference between this crisis and that of the thirties. This one is not approached with the same resignation as the other. Very few people knew the cause of the great crisis that happened before the war. Today, thousands of people know exactly that it is a purchasing power crisis, a money crisis.

Let me quote at this point part of a speech delivered by former president Roosevelt, in his inaugural address given during the crisis period of 1929. Here it is:

It is in this spirit that you and I have to face our difficulties. Only material interests are involved, thank heaven! Values have fallen to amazingly low levels; taxes have increased; we have lost our solvency power; all governments are confronted with an alarming reduction in their income; the exchange system is paralysed in the commercial traffic. A more serious situation still is an army of unemployed facing the problem of its subsistence, and a great number of other individuals who have but greatly reduced income. One must be a smug optimist to deny the dismalness of the situation...

The changers have given up their seats in the temple of our civilization. We can now restore and consecrate again this temple of ancient truths. The extent of the restoration will depend on how far we shall go in substituting superior social values to purely monetary motives.

Happiness does not consist only in the possession of money; it is found in the joy of work accomplished, in the emotion of the creative effort.

It must be recognized that material wealth is not a barometer for success.

No doubt the 1970 administrators will reply that the situation is not the same today.

I understand that the various programmes of pension, allowances, unemployment insurance and others have contributed to bring a little relief in an intolerable situation. But let us consult the reports of the Economic Council of Canada for 1969 and 1970, and the editorials of current newspapers. In its edition of April 23, 1969, *La presse* published an editorial entitled "Poor Man's Bread", and this is what it said:

We will never be ashamed enough, we will never be humiliated enough; the truth is thrown into our face: "four million Canadians live in a state of poverty!" You do not want to know anything about that because your personal comfort, your high standard of living, even the affluence which is common with many people must not be upset and then the problem of the have-nots does not concern you. This is what you think: think again!

Whether you like it or not, however annoying the shedding of light on harsh truths, the Economic Council of Canada has just given a lesson to the whole country in a brief introduced yesterday before a special Senate committee.

### Employment Programs

• (3:50 p.m.)

The tone is cutting and no one is spared. Here are a few examples: Poverty is a fact. Its victims are numbered in millions. Those who claim that there will always be poor people, are but disgusting egoists. To have so many underprivileged in an affluent society is a shame. To repeat that the evil can be cured once and for all is fallacious. The Senate committee was shocked. It had every reason to be.

In closing, the editorial writer added and I quote:

Pious wishes will not help much. When a society becomes "poisoned"—the phrase is taken out of the document—it has little use for verbal poultices. The most scholarly theories collapse. Alas! the Economic Council itself, frantic in the face of a situation which it dares not describe, has no other recourse but pompous words. Public understanding, enlightened humanitarianism, combined effort of institutions and governments. Of course, there is nothing more noble. However, the daily bread cannot be found in dictionaries.

In the official report of the Debates of the Senate for November 5, 1970, the hon. senator for Madawaska-Restigouche, speaking on poverty in Canada, stated this:

My colleagues on the poverty committee know what I am talking about because they too have heard these people. We have visited their homes. We have talked with them. We have talked to their children. It would be impossible for me to try to describe some of the scenes we witnessed.

Never before have I thought that in a country like Canada, a country so rich in natural resources, this Canada of ours where the standard of living is amongst the world's highest, I would witness such living conditions.

These people are furious because during the last fifteen years they have been running around the country to find employment, and when they succeeded in doing so and became established, they were soon displaced by so-called progress.

We have all this misery and poverty around us while we spend billions of dollars on social welfare. Just think for a moment what it would be like if those social measures were not in effect today. It would make the thirties, which we all remember, seem like years of good fortune.

And yet today we are so geared that we can spend up to \$30,000 to create one job. What a price to pay, honourable senators! What a stupid price, I would say! And to whom is it paid? In most cases to people who are taking advantage of the loose legislation covering the tax payer's money to serve their own interests rather than the public interest.

And furthermore, in the same speech, the senator stated:

We are living in a sick society. I feel it is a sick society when freedom is abused every hour of the day, with no respect for the consequences. It is a sick society where respect for and cooperation with the authorities elected by a democratic system are gradually being replaced by obstruction, vengeance and, too often, by revolutionary action. It is a sick society with a monetary system whereby every dollar in reserve may be doubled in 10 to 12 years due to the high rate of interest.

This statement of fact can be made in Canada in 1970. You will agree that it is high time for the supporters of the "just society" to wake up and to find another remedy than credit restrictions and taxes on building materials to improve the situation.

Forced unemployment, with the physical and moral miseries which come with it and often follow it for years is a calamity; this is a truly modern curse which