

useless, or which will not return a value to the country. Surely the government must have little faith in itself if it admits that any public works programme it might undertake is bound to be wasteful.

The other objection is that it might tend to perpetuate itself. What is wrong with a public works programme perpetuating itself as long as it is useful and producing something for the benefit of all the people of Canada? That is regression back to the laissez-faire drift which characterizes the present trend of the government. To emphasize that limitation the minister said in his speech:

We believe that government should create conditions, a climate, if I may use that term, within which initiative can be exercised and enterprise flourish. To create such conditions, we believe it should be made possible, through reduction and simplification of taxes, and in other ways, for private enterprise to operate boldly and courageously, and, in doing so, provide most of the employment; and that government should, by direct action, fill the gap in employment—when, but only when, there is a gap to fill that would not otherwise be filled.

There are two parts to that statement which are very important. First of all he would create those climatic conditions for progress by reduction and simplification of taxes. I do not know what simplification of taxes would have to do with creating a proper climate for industry. But what will reduction of taxes mean to more than half the people of Canada who do not pay income tax today because they have not enough income on which to pay taxes? Surely the minister can see that under his programme the very people who would most need a shot in the arm, so to speak, would be the ones who would not get it, and the ones who would get it would be the corporations which would have their taxes reduced.

The minister went on to say that the government would take direct action to provide employment when, but only when, there is a gap to be filled that would not otherwise be filled. In other words the government is quite satisfied to leave everything to private enterprise, to let private enterprise decide not only how much employment there shall be, but in what particular industries, where it shall be and what the wages shall be; and the government itself will stand to one side as a sort of referee and only take action when there is a gap to be filled. That sounds all right, but it is not practical, because the government if it follows that course will never be prepared to do anything until unemployment is upon us. The last depression surely taught us this much, that if full employment is to be provided it takes planning. The

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government will have to plan their public works projects for the good of the people many years ahead, and not sit around and wait until the last moment, until private enterprise has broken down and failed, and then try to rush in and fill gaps by establishing camps in the hills where men can cut cordwood at twenty cents a day. But that is the policy the minister is trying to bring forward.

In contrast with that I want to quote what the Prime Minister said in his speech in 1942 to the American Federation of Labor in Toronto. He said:

When the war is won there will be an immense task to repair the great physical destruction caused by the war . . . but the work of repairing and restoring the ravages of war will not be enough.

He recognized that, and went on:

Fortunately, we are also learning that the only limit to our productive capacity is the limit to our resources, and our will and skill to use them to satisfy human need instead of human greed.

That is a statement which implies a great deal more than the Minister of Finance implied with his gap-filling statement. There is a statement by the Prime Minister which implies that it is up to the government, and was even in 1942 when the war was still on, to start looking towards the future and start planning for full employment. I like the words the Prime Minister used:

. . . the only limit to our productive capacity is the limit to our resources, and our will and skill to use them to satisfy human need instead of human greed.

That does not sound very much like private enterprise. It sounds like public enterprise, that the objective of industry shall be to satisfy human needs. The objective of profit-making industry is to satisfy their own urge for profits—I will not call it human greed, although that was implied by the Prime Minister.

In contrast with that, the policy brought forward by the Minister of Finance looks puny. I think he should go back and read over some of the speeches made by the Prime Minister in 1942, 1943 and 1944 and try to follow them out in his budget. Surely when the Prime Minister admits that the only limit to our productive capacity is the limit of our resources and our will and skill to use them, it means that the government should undertake to see that our resources are developed to satisfy the needs of the people and that employment should be the right of the working man.