

the situation in the cities, but these pioneers who come from Ukrainian or Polish or perhaps German stock have settled together in certain blocks. They had no opportunity to learn the English language. When they apply for citizenship or naturalization certificates they are refused because they have no knowledge of English. It is not their fault. We must realize that they had no opportunity to learn. They have lived in this country for ten or fifteen or twenty years and their sons and daughters are Canadian born. Surely the mother of a son who is perhaps serving this country in the army should be compensated and able to apply for a pension. To-day I have in my office scores of letters from such mothers. They are appealing to me to do something for them. One old mother about seventy-five years of age had one son. This son is married and his assigned pay had to go to his wife and children, so that he could not help his mother. The mother had to go on relief, and the municipality gives her \$5 a month. What can one do with \$5 a month? She cannot apply for an old age pension because she is not a citizen of Canada even though she has lived here for forty-two years. This is something that should be solved.

I am told I have only five minutes left, so I hasten on to mention some of the matters that have been in my mind for quite a while. I hope in all seriousness that the purpose of setting up this committee is not in order to draft a charter for an election. I should like to see it a charter for social security, but so many of these measures that are framed appear to be devoid of everything but perhaps a catch for another election. I say to the government, that it has all the freedom it wants, let us see that this problem is tackled in a proper manner, forgetting about elections. If they have to come they will come; if not, so much the better for the country during war time. This measure must not be a charter for a new election; if it is, the people of Canada will resent it.

In conclusion, I would suggest a method by which we may approach this problem of social security. I spoke of food; why not take the same provision which is now made for our men in the armed forces and say that this shall be used to supply our old people and those who are in need of food. Immediately after the war substitute one for the other. We talk about clothing; why not say that the item which now appears in our budget for uniforms and clothing for our people in the armed services will be used in peace time to provide clothes for those of our people who have not the proper kind of clothing? We are manufacturing aeroplanes, guns and all sorts of

[Mr. Hlynka.]

materials for war purposes. Why not say that we are going to continue to use the appropriations we have devoted to these purposes in order to meet the needs of our people in regard to education, health and so on. All that is necessary after the war is to select a few of these things and substitute the new demands that will come upon us.

In my opinion neither this nor any other government should look for any commendation or congratulation for having attempted to deal with this problem. I think this action is long overdue; and, if I may say so, if this government did not wish to take this step of its own volition, it would be forced to do so by public opinion, for this question of social security is now very much in the air. Let us then face this problem squarely and deal with it on a humanitarian basis so that we may hold up our heads in dignity, instead of doing as some hon. members would have us do, promise too much and then of course be unable to carry out our promises.

Mr. A. R. ADAMSON (York West): Mr. Speaker, I take part in this debate merely because of the urgency of certain matters which I believe should be brought to the attention of the house to be dealt with now instead of waiting until this committee presents a lengthy report. In the eyes of many people the appointment of a committee has come to be synonymous with an attempt to stall. We have had committees set up which sat for a long time and brought in reports which were implemented only in part if at all. I refer in particular to the reconstruction committee of last year, whose report was not implemented; and I refer also to the Sirois commission of some years ago, on whose report no action whatever was taken. I mention these committees and commissions because many people have come to think that the setting up of a committee means an attempt to find a way out from under, and I want to emphasize that if the government looks upon this committee as a way out from under, Canada will face a most serious situation.

I believe that instead of setting up this committee the government should have created a ministry of reconstruction, headed by a minister who would have charge of all matters of social security, reconstruction and rehabilitation. Australia now has such a minister and Australia is still liable to attack by the Japanese. This was brought home to us very clearly only yesterday by the sinking of that huge convoy of Japanese transports which was definitely trying to establish a jumping-off place for an attack on the Australian mainland. If Australia, while in