

character of the Canadian people, plus all the wealth of the Canadian people—not on only one commodity.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

After Recess

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. HARRY BUTCHER (Last Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I wish to call to your attention and the attention of the house two sentences to be found in the speech from the throne. The first of these sentences I know to convey nothing but the truth. The second I also believe to be absolutely true. The first will be found at the foot of the first column of the second page. It reads as follows:

—the economic situation still weighs heavily upon all classes of the community,—

I think possibly one might say that this is a general truth. But on the other hand this situation weighs more heavily on some classes of the community than upon others. There are some classes, very few in number, to whom perhaps the situation does not present any great difficulties. For instance, the fortunate few who derive their income from government bonds no doubt find that their spending power has been increased by the fall in the general price level. On the other hand there are some classes who are suffering most acutely. The attention of the house has been constantly drawn to this fact.

The other statement is to be found earlier in the first column of the second page. It reads:

The problem of unemployment continues to receive the anxious attention of my ministers.

I am quite confident that that is correct. It could not be otherwise.

I also find in the paragraph from which I have taken this sentence a promise for the present, reading:

Under the powers granted them at the last session of parliament they—

The ministers.

—have been able to develop further, in co-operation with the provinces and municipalities, a scheme of direct relief to be put into operation during the autumn and winter months to the extent required by prevailing conditions.

There is further a declaration as to the future:

Plans for the reestablishment of the unemployed in various parts of the country are in preparation and will become operative as soon as, in the opinion of my ministers, the public expenditure incident thereto will be productive of commensurate benefits.

The problem of unemployment is certainly one factor, a very important factor, in the condition that is referred to in the first sentence that I have read. The economic situation still weighs heavily upon all classes of the community. Another most important factor is the low price level, rendering it impossible for the producers of this country to spend as they do in normal times. As far as one can see there are no plans for permanent improvement yet formulated by the government. But a large proportion of our people are suffering from hunger, suffering from the lack of clothing, lack of fuel, many of them in abject destitution, many homeless, and a very great many hopeless. I am quite confident that every hon. member of this house is not only seized of the desperate character of the situation but is exceedingly anxious to see it remedied. I cannot believe that within these walls there is any one who is indifferent in the slightest degree to the sufferings of our less fortunate fellow men. Everything that has been done in the past has merely tended to amelioration of these conditions. Much has been done, I admit, to render the position of our less fortunate fellows less uncomfortable than it otherwise would have been. But it appears to me that there are yet underlying evils to be eradicated before our people can enjoy the happiness and prosperity to which all citizens of this country are justly entitled. We are still told that there are to-day between one and one and a half million people living on the borderline of want, men, women and children who are lacking many of the necessities of life and all of them lacking all the minor luxuries of life, and that in a country which, as has been so often said by hon. members on both sides of the house, is richly endowed with natural resources, with wealth of almost every kind, and possessing a singularly resourceful, energetic and willing people and abundance of up-to-date machinery for production. I have no doubt too that every hon. member has pondered these facts, and has done his very best to find a solution for our difficulties.

Nevertheless most of us feel that these conditions cannot continue indefinitely. It is not reasonable to suppose that the patience of the people is illimitable, that it knows no end. I am of the opinion that if this parliament does not strive with great diligence to find a way out, or striving, fails to find it, one of these days the people will say "If the parliament that we have elected cannot find a way out, we will find other individuals to perform the services that we have imposed