

to take his seat in this house, and I pledge to the people of Winnipeg North Centre and to the people of this dominion my loyalty to the cause of social justice which Mr. Woodsworth served so well.

Coming as I do directly from a by-election campaign, Mr. Speaker, I feel that I am in a position to give to this house a clear statement of the views of the people I represent, and I am satisfied that the views of my constituents are those of an ever-increasing number of Canadians right across this country. In the general election of 1940 the government candidate, though defeated, polled over 40 per cent of the votes cast in Winnipeg North Centre. The Liberal and Conservative candidates together polled 59 per cent. In the by-election held on November 30, 1942, the government candidate, supported by three cabinet ministers, having the old party field entirely to himself, received only 28 per cent of the votes cast and lost his deposit. Our vote rose to over 70 per cent of the votes cast, representing the largest vote and the largest majority ever given in Winnipeg North Centre. I suggest that a similar shift in public opinion is taking place all over Canada, and it behoves this house to consider seriously the matters which are of concern to the people whom I have the honour to represent.

The anxieties of my constituents are two. First, they are deeply concerned about the mess that obtains at the present time in war production and selective service, the existence of unemployment, and matters relating to labour policy. Second, they are filled with fear and misgiving for the post-war period. Speaking further on the present situation, may I tell this house that the people of Winnipeg, anxious as they are to make their fullest possible contribution to the winning of the war, are, to put it mildly, aroused by the lay-offs which have been taking place for some time in war industries. During the month of January I wired the Minister of Munitions and Supply (Mr. Howe) three times, advising him of the lay-offs in such plants as Dominion Bridge, Manitoba Bridge, Western Steel and the Defence Industries Limited cordite plant at Transcona. In the replies I received I was advised on one occasion that a new contract had been awarded which would make possible the reemployment of a number of men who had been laid off, but when I called the manager of the plant concerned I was told that the new contract could be filled without such reemployment. On another occasion a Winnipeg plant, in posting a lay-off notice, stated that full production was anticipated in the spring, but the Minister of Munitions and Supply advised me that such could not be

counted upon. The Winnipeg city council, in conjunction with many local organizations, has sought to intervene in this matter. The final word of the minister to the mayor of Winnipeg, as well as to me, was simply this, and I quote from his letter of January 14:

I regret as much as anyone the dislocation of staff that results from changes or reductions in programmes. However, this is inevitable in war production. One of the principal functions of the national selective service organization is to arrange for the reemployment of any staff that may be displaced in war industry through changes or reductions in programme. This department maintains a very close liaison with national selective service in this connection.

On Monday I asked the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mitchell) what steps his department was taking to deal with this situation, and what was his reply? After trying to minimize the situation by referring to inevitable "pockets of unemployment" he said, and I quote from *Hansard* at page 23.

The Department of Labour is working in close cooperation with the Department of Munitions and Supply in an effort to place these people where they can be most useful.

These two ministers may feel that they answered my question by passing the responsibility to each other, but that does not provide employment in Winnipeg, nor does it make possible the full production to which the workers are exhorted by posters and placards hanging in the war plants from which they are laid off. The failure of capitalism, even under the impetus of war with its demands for equipment, to maintain full production, is evidence of the imperative need for economic planning. The people I represent are deeply concerned over the failure of the government in this regard.

In his reply to me on Monday last the Minister of Labour endeavoured to brush aside my question by stating that large numbers of those registered for employment in Winnipeg are women, and that other large numbers are unemployables. Entirely apart from those groups, however, on January 21, just before I left Winnipeg, there were 1,800 employable men registered for work, many of them having had machine shop experience. When these men are told to register for unemployment benefits, to remain idle on \$9 or \$13 a week, with a war on, they use language which I thought was unparliamentary before I came to this house. As for selective service, the people of Winnipeg feel that its only purpose is to hide the fact that the government has no plan for full employment in the production of our war needs.

There is another fact which must not be forgotten, even in war-time; that is, that