

Unemployment

Utopian, unrealistic visionary that the man who rises and says, in the name of free enterprise, we must continue to have 600,000, 800,000, 1,000,000 people thrown right out of the economic machine, right out of the social garden in which the rest of us live. That is the impractical visionary view that will bring disaster not merely to this government—and no one could wish it to come there more quickly than I—but to the people of Canada. I suggest that those who sit on the Liberal benches in this house had better use all their influence and all their efforts on those few men who at the present time control the political life of Canada and suggest, for instance, to that—I don't know who he is—Liberal lawyer who was quoted earlier, who suggested that the opposition members are deliberately undermining the economy, and his kind, that the 600,000 unemployed, their friends and their families, are not going to have a very kindly view of a political party that permits those responsible officers to make irresponsible, inane statements such as that. These people are going to demand from the Liberal party something more reasonable, something more realistic. They are going to demand from them some hope at least that there will be a permanent solution to this problem of producing and distributing goods in the interests of all the people of Canada. No clap-trap about free enterprise, about individual liberty, initiative and all the other nonsense we hear is going to weigh in the balance one iota. They want results.

I would warn this Liberal government and this Liberal party that they have been in office over an unusual period of free, easy and comfortable years, and that in the dangerous and difficult years ahead something more than sitting at a desk and pounding it when a minister speaks is to be required of them. Their constituents are going to ask them very nasty, awkward questions when they go home at Easter and in the summer. They are not going to be satisfied with being told that the Prime Minister is the most marvellous and unique personage in the history of Canada. They are not going to be told that they should leave the decisions to these men who have guided them so well in the past, because people are not interested in how they were guided in the past. They want to know how they are to be guided tomorrow.

So far, not one single member of the cabinet has risen in his place to give us even the slightest inkling in the first place that they recognize the seriousness of this problem, and in the second place that they have even the ghost of an idea of how to deal with it. Such governments do not last very long. In

[Mr. Cameron (Nanaimo).]

spite of overwhelming majorities, such governments eventually go into the discard very quickly, very suddenly.

We have heard in this house that the problem of unemployment is giving great concern and great worry to the government. We have seen no sign of it. On the other hand, we have seen a government that has been determined to reject every practical proposal put to it. Proposals have been put to the government for two years to embark on a large-scale international aid program such as the Colombo plan, as a pilot plan. We were told in the first place that we were very generous; we have actually increased our contribution by \$1 million this year. Every Liberal member must have cringed in his seat when that was announced. They must have all cringed when they heard on the radio the scathing denunciation of that niggardliness; but of course we are told that we have increased it as far as it is possible to increase it because there is a definite limit to the power of those places to absorb aid. That was the nonsense that came from the government benches last year. I hope it does not come again this year because it will mean that our government does not even pay any attention to the statements of those in control of the administration of the Colombo plan who told us here in Ottawa last summer that there is no limit to the power of those areas to absorb capital aid.

The government will have to produce something better than that as an excuse for not increasing our contribution to such plans as the Colombo plan to the extent of making a worth-while contribution there and to the extent of solving, temporarily at least, the problem that is posed by unemployment in Canada. Therefore, I hope that we shall have from the government, some time before this debate ends, a sensible, reasoned, practical statement of what the government proposes to do, not merely a recital of this government's bleeding heart, not merely to be told that it is shedding bitter tears over the plight of the unemployed, but some permanent program that has been evolved as a result of serious thinking of the kind that this government has ceased to do for many years.

Hon. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I rise before the vote is taken because of the amendment to the amendment. And I wish to deal with that and refer briefly to the subject matter under discussion. The amendment to the amendment reads as follows:

That the amendment be amended by inserting therein immediately after the words "this emergency", the following words: "including the immediate implementation of the federal government's promise of 1945 to make adequate provision for the employable unemployed"; and also