

British Empire itself we have several schemes of unemployment insurance, for instance in the Irish Free State, New Zealand and Queensland. How, then, can we say that Canada is a progressive country with respect to its provision for unemployed workers? I believe that public opinion to-day is favourable to an unemployment insurance scheme in this country. This house approved of it in 1929. The Liberal government, of which I had the honour of being a member, canvassed the provinces with respect to it and we had replies, which should be on the files of the department, some of them favourable. I discussed the matter with some of the leaders of the provincial governments, and after discussing it they became even more favourable. On the 11th of May, 1932, I ventured to place on Hansard a suggested scheme, which though not complete in detail would have served at least as a basis for a scheme of unemployment insurance for this country, and I was very glad to read that my hon. friend the Minister of Finance (Mr. Rhodes) did me the honour of referring in some of his speeches to some things I had advocated in that speech. I pointed out that in periods of severe depression this fund undoubtedly would be drawn upon to such an extent that it probably could not stand the strain, and to cope with that situation I proposed that governments should refrain from going ahead with very large public works in times of prosperity but should reserve such works and the funds for them to relieve unemployment in times of depression. That suggested scheme provided for allowances of \$55 a month for married men and \$30 a month for single men, and if I remember correctly it called for something like 15 cents to 30 cents a week contribution from the employee. That was only a suggestion to assist the government in a small way in working out some kind of satisfactory scheme.

On November 22, 1931, the Prime Minister made a direct promise that he would institute such a scheme in this country. He said:

Under those circumstances, with a census about to be taken and the necessary figures to become available, with our actuarial force willing and ready to tackle the problem from the angles that I have suggested, does any hon. gentleman think that we would be doing justice to the Dominion of Canada or to ourselves if we now passed a resolution asking the government immediately to do something which it is not equipped to do?

I propose, if we are spared as a government and as individuals, that the information we will have before our term of office is ended shall be crystallized into the form of legislative proposals to be submitted to this house.

[Mr. Heenan.]

I am inclined to think it was then safe for the Prime Minister to make that statement when he included the words:

I propose, if we are spared as a government . . .

I do not believe that the people of this country will tolerate this government very much longer, even though it is a promising government. Their time is limited. But I would like to see them actually try to crystallize something before the people send them into oblivion. In 1933, two years later, the hon. member who introduced this resolution asked this question:

Will the government be in a position at this session to bring down legislation dealing with unemployment insurance, as referred to by the right hon. the premier, in debate in this house on November 22nd last?

Mr. Bennett: The answer is no.

It seemed to me at the time that the government, after blowing hot, had started to blow cold again, as usual. They had cooled off very perceptibly a couple of days ago, when the Minister of Railways deprecated the idea that this was the time to introduce an unemployment insurance scheme. I remember him appealing for cooperation from all sides of the house in that well-known red-blooded manner in which he speaks, and in concluding his remarks he said:

This is not a time for demagogism but a time for leadership, and after the leadership of this government carries Canada back, as it will, to normal conditions, then we will correct other evils. We will deal with such questions as unemployment insurance and planned economy, for I personally believe that we shall have to deal with these matters. But when your house is on fire you do not stop to argue about loans or taxes. The first thing you do is to put out the fire, leaving other matters to be dealt with later.

So the Minister of Railways, speaking for the government, apparently had cooled off; evidently he was trying to put out the fire that had been started by the government itself.

Mr. MANION: May I just inform my hon. friend that so far as my remarks in connection with unemployment insurance were concerned I was speaking for myself only. I was giving not the government's opinion, but my own opinion.

Mr. HEENAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, that is the essence of the solidarity of a government. Not so long ago the Secretary of State (Mr. Cahan) said that undoubtedly under certain conditions the railways of Canada will be or ought to be amalgamated. We had the Minister of Railways say that there was no thought of amalgamation, and the Prime Min-