

been the result? Immediately the whole question would have become one of party discussion. The bill would have been criticized for containing this and for not containing that. My hon. friends know very well how these matters develop in the House of Commons. But presenting the question in a broad way to a committee of this house affords ample opportunity for the study of all aspects of it. It is a matter which affects, in Canada, not only the dominion but the provinces; and, as hon. members well know, there are in these matters of social legislation financial difficulties, matters which relate to sources of revenue and possible changes in the sources of revenue; and constitutional difficulties, matters which relate to the powers of the provinces and the dominion respectively. All these matters lie at the root of efficient administration of any social security measure, and they are questions which can be studied by a committee of this house better than they can be discussed in the first instance on the floor of the house.

Mr. GRAYDON: At what stage of this national social insurance is it proposed to consult the provinces with respect to any dominion-provincial scheme?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Well, that is not for me to say. That is one of the things which I should think the committee would be in a better position to say than I would. The provinces will certainly have to be consulted; and that is one of the reasons I think that the matter ought to go before a committee of the house in the first instance. We shall then learn, in the light of the discussions in committee, what in their opinion is the order in which certain steps should be taken and the best time to take them.

May I say to my hon. friends that there is another reason why I feel that this matter should go first of all to a committee. None of us knows the particular trend that this war is going to take. But we do know that this year is going to be the most serious for the Canadian forces of any since the war commenced. What may be happening in April, May or June, sooner or later, no one in this house can say. I for one should be very sorry indeed if either between now and the months I have mentioned, or at that time, or later, or whenever the time may be, while this house is in session, that all our armed forces were engaged in mortal combat with the enemy it should be found that we were or had been spending most of our time discussing in this house whether or not certain aspects of social insurance should be passed imme-

diately; or, worse than all, that we should be convening or having at the same time a conference between the provinces and ourselves on this matter. Everything this year will have to be done in the light of what developments the war takes; and the government, in planning its programme, has had that very much in mind. We want to expedite our programme, but the matters we wish to discuss first and foremost are those which are related immediately to the prosecution of the war. There is a very large financial programme to be considered, the war appropriation bill, the programme with respect to allocation of supplies to the united nations, other policies which bear immediately on the war effort of our country as it is to-day and will have to be taken up before any other questions are begun to be discussed at length. But that does not prevent a committee holding its sittings on the same days, obtaining expert advice, and being in a position before the session is over to come back to this house with recommendations which will help to expedite the legislation which ought to be passed. That is one of the reasons why the matter has been referred to a committee.

I have gone on at greater length than I should have. I will close with just a reference to what seemed an extraordinary statement on the part of my hon. friend in the discussion this afternoon. In his veiled attack on the Minister of Labour—which was equally a veiled attack on the government itself—by mentioning the Minister of Labour, and also the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner), the one as having been associated with labour in the past, and the other with the farmers in the past, while the rest of the government were not either farmers or working men, my hon. friend put forward a new theory that, namely, of government on an occupational basis.

Let us go over the government as a whole, my hon. friend said; but he picked out just these two. The implication of what he was saying was that there are in the government a number of hon. members who belong to other callings or professions and that we ought here to have a government formed on a basis of occupation. No doubt we shall hear more of that from other members. Well, if that is to be the theory of government from now on, perhaps it would be well at once to point out certain fallacies with respect to it. My hon. friend spoke about himself as a great friend of labour and of the farmers. These were the two groups in the community with whom he had associated all his life. They were the ones to be considered first, and anyone who