

the minister's request should be acceded to. I am going to insist that the hon. member for Hastings-Peterborough go ahead.

Mr. WHITE (Hastings-Peterborough): On a point of order—

Mr. GILLIS: Have I the floor or not?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member for Hastings-Peterborough is speaking on a point of order.

Mr. WHITE (Hastings-Peterborough): I feel that the arrangement agreed to between the minister and myself was a reasonable one and I was happy to agree to it. Under the circumstances, I would not care to proceed tonight.

Mr. MARTIN: I thank my hon. friend.

Mr. GILLIS: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that I am not able to oblige the minister, but I also have responsibilities in this house.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. GILLIS: I have responsibilities even if some members across the way have not.

An hon. MEMBER: Make it snappy.

Mr. GILLIS: I am referring to those hon. members who interrupt when someone is trying to talk.

An hon. MEMBER: Go ahead; talk.

Mr. GILLIS: At least they should have sufficient courtesy to keep quiet.

As I stated at the outset, the matter I wish to discuss tonight affects the people of the maritime provinces generally and Nova Scotia in particular. There are over 30,000 unemployed in the maritime provinces and perhaps some 17,000 of those are in Nova Scotia. A large percentage of the unemployed in the maritime provinces are service personnel of this war. From present indications it would appear that there is no government policy or policy on the part of free enterprise to create anything in the way of employment in any one of those provinces.

In addition, the old relief measures which prevailed prior to the war are not in existence, and those service personnel who do not come under the out-of-work benefits or those who have run beyond the statutory provisions of the Unemployment Insurance Act have no relief whatsoever. On two occasions in this house I suggested to the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Mackenzie) that the out-of-work benefits for service personnel should be extended until such time as they can be gainfully employed. That was some time ago, but no extension has been made and there is no

indication from the government that an extension will be made. Second, I suggested on two or three occasions that the Unemployment Insurance Act should be expanded to provide unemployment relief, if you must call it that, for able-bodied workers who cannot secure employment in any part of Canada. There has been no indication on the part of the government as to whether that will be done.

Direct relief for the people I am discussing is thrown back into the hands of the municipalities and most municipalities across this country are not financially able to handle direct relief. There is no arrangement, either federal or provincial, to establish relief measures of any kind for the unemployed. In that respect they are worse off today than they were in the 1930's, up to the outbreak of this war, because at that time there was some system of relief. As I say, thousands of these people have run beyond the Unemployment Insurance Act and the out-of-work benefits.

The worst feature of the whole situation in the maritimes is that, while these unemployed are milling around, no plans are being made by the federal or provincial governments to give them relief, and there are no plans on the part of free enterprise, or at least none in sight, to establish secondary industries. On the other hand, people who are endeavouring to do something in that part of the country are stopped by federal regulation. I should like to give three or four examples of this.

I raised a question in the house on at least two occasions and I have written to the engineering branch of the Department of Public Works with reference to repairing an old pier at Sydney, Nova Scotia. This would cost only a few thousand dollars. There are a few people in Sydney who are prepared to establish a fish processing plant and a bait freezing plant which would service the fishermen for about thirty miles along the coast line, men who now have no harbour facilities. An expenditure of a few thousand dollars by the federal government would create new wealth through the establishment of these plants which would be set up to service the fishermen on that coast. This matter has been held in abeyance for eighteen months, and the men who were going to establish these plants have become disgusted to the point where they are not sure whether they will proceed with them.

A couple of boys got together in Sydney, Nova Scotia, about a year ago and pooled their resources, purchased a building and put some equipment in it. They made a contract with a canning factory in Ontario to supply cans.