

The Address

ism is not the best kind of spirit. The Minister of Justice (Sir Lomer Gouin), towards the close of his address the other day, made a plea for co-operation or unity. While I noticed that the hon. gentleman took shelter behind the old feud between the provinces in answering the charges of the Opposition, nevertheless, I think the plea which he made was very timely.

I want to make a plea for co-operation. Let us get over this cantankerous negation of oppositions, and let us make it possible for every one to make a contribution and assume some responsibility for the deliberations of this Parliament. I believe that co-operation can be worked in parliament just as it is working in the great industrial system. I believe in co-operation in government, because it is already working unconsciously in the industrial field. I believe in co-operation in government because the fact of interdependence between the industrial life of the nation and international life is one of the most significant facts of modern history. We have been forced to co-operate through the industrial process of our time, and we are also being forced to co-operate in government by the political necessities of our time.

I want to speak now of the next question, which is that of the food, clothing and shelter of our people. We have already produced twice as much as we are permitted to consume. You will remember the problem as it was stated so admirably and so graphically by the hon. member for Centre Winnipeg (Mr. Woodsworth). He gave us something of the extent as well as of the intensity of this problem of unemployment, and he advanced, among other things, the consideration that organized labour throughout Canada has endorsed, some scheme of unemployment insurance chargeable to the industries of the country. We emphasize that because it is a necessity at this time. We do not recognize that it embodies an ultimate solution of the problem. But inasmuch as the governments—Dominion and provincial, as well as municipal—are to-day handing out for no service, doles which corrupt those who give and corrupt those who receive, it might be as well if some insurance scheme were developed which would place upon the shoulders of the Government the responsibility of finding work for those people who to-day are receiving doles for doing no work. I will not, however, traverse the ground which my hon. friend covered; I will take

[Mr. Irvine.]

up this problem from a slightly different angle. I would like to say that I was very much disappointed with the statement in the Speech from the Throne that this Government considers it to be the duty of the municipal and provincial governments to look after the unemployed. I want to say in that connection that a mere statement in the Speech from the Throne is not sufficient to throw off the shoulders of the federal government the responsibility for unemployment which grows out of the industrial system of this country. The unemployment situation is but the fruit of a tree, the roots of which reach to the very subsoil of our national economic system. Unemployment is a permanent thing as long as the present system exists. In this connection I wish to quote very briefly from one who ought to know what he is talking about in this regard; I am going to quote an excerpt from the report of a commission of the Ontario Government of which Sir John Willison happened to be the chairman:

The result of their enquiries has impressed on your Commissioners most forcibly the fact that the depression, which occurred in 1914 and 1915, was but a phase of the movement alternating between inflation and depression, which is a characteristic feature of modern industry. A false sense of security should not blind the business world, in times of thriving trade, to the fact that wide-spread unemployment is likely to recur in future.

Seemingly, this is a recurring defect in our system, and we have to find out where that defect resides. What is the situation to-day? Let us confine our inquiry for the moment to Canada. There is somewhere a chronic defect in the industrial machinery. We find on the one hand that great industrial enterprises are on the very borders of collapse; we find that industrial strife is rampant; we find that unemployment is extensive and exists throughout the Dominion. Employer and employee, producer and consumer, alike are dependent on the industrial machine provided for

the individuals of the nation by
4 p.m. producing goods as, when and
where required. This is, of
course, the accepted purpose of industries, namely, to produce goods that will meet the needs of humanity. But production for money has in some ways superseded the production for the supplying of human need. In this substitution of a secondary aim, we find the cause of our industrial chaos.

Now, let us look more definitely at this problem. Will anyone say, will any hon.