

go by. I would be very thankful to the hon. gentleman if he would tell us what the government proposes to do.

Hon. NORMAN McL. ROGERS (Minister of Labour): Mr. Chairman, so far as the setting up of a committee of the house to study the problem of youth is concerned I must say that it is not within my power to give my hon. friend any assurance in that regard. I would point out to him that in the bill now before the committee there is a provision for a special study of the problem of youth in relation to the wider problem of unemployment. We recognize that the young men and women who have come of age during the past five years have been confronted with an extremely difficult situation, something for which I believe there is no precedent in the history of our country. The problem requires special investigation and we are providing in this bill that there shall be a special committee to consider the problems related to the employment of youth.

Mr. POULIOT: I thank the hon. gentleman. I have another observation to make, which I shall try to make as short as possible. Paragraph (a) reads:

The commission shall,

(a) carry out as soon as possible a national registration and classification of persons on relief in cooperation with the provinces, municipalities and private and public bodies;

We have to wage a war against unemployment. During the war the allied countries were fighting together. There was the British army, which included the Canadian corps; there was the French army, the Italian army and the armies of the other allies. It was not a case of the British army on one side and the armies of the allies on the other; they were all cooperating. I understand that anything can be done by cooperation provided the parties concerned are willing to work together.

What was the basis of the British North America Act? That legislation was drafted by a very great Canadian, Sir John A. Macdonald. It was drafted in his own hand, and the original is specially kept in the dominion archives. Why was Sir John A. Macdonald such a great Canadian, and why is his memory still so much respected by our fellow citizens? It was because Sir John Macdonald, like Sir Wilfrid Laurier later on, was a great psychologist. He knew men and understood them, because he met them frequently and listened to them. That was why he was such a great leader of men. He had a wonderful experience and it is because of that experience that the very

principle of the most important section of the British North America Act can be summarized in these words—let everyone mind his own business. The idea behind the British North America Act was that the municipalities should be free to exercise all the powers that were conferred upon them. The same rule was applied to the provinces and it was also applied to the federal power. For a very long time, from 1867 until 1930, that spirit prevailed. In Nova Scotia, Joseph Howe; in Quebec, Mercier; in Ontario, Mowat; in New Brunswick, others—and they have had their disciples in each province—have fought for provincial rights. Why? They feared the encroachment of the federal power upon their own rights. Everyone was master in his own house, and did not tolerate interference from any neighbour. There was no superiority. The federal government had its own limitations and so had the provinces and the municipalities. So to speak, everyone was at home. Now everyone is living in other people's houses. That is the trouble. Why did it happen? It happened because in the fall session of 1930 and in the session of 1931 a tripartite plan was imposed upon this country, and in that plan everything was mixed up by the federal government of the time. It is one of the greatest errors that have been committed, because when it was done the federal power thought that they had authority over the provinces and the municipalities; and it shows that at the time the real spirit of the confederation pact was overlooked and ceased to prevail.

The gentleman who was quoted yesterday, Mr. Hirota, the new Prime Minister of Japan, said something that should be inscribed in every legislative assembly room in the world—there is no problem that cannot be solved by common sense. And it is only a repetition of what Marshal Foch said when he was leading the allied armies to victory by applying to modern times the principles of warfare laid down by the great Napoleon, namely, that war is common sense. It is just because the British North America Act was based on common sense that we cannot change that part of it without making the same mistake that was made in 1930 by the late government.

My hon. friend from Vancouver-Burrard (Mr. McGeer) has given us his views in regard to currency. Some people regard them as extravagant but I am not going to pass any judgment on them now. On the other hand, the federal government has incurred a great responsibility in connection with some works which were not needed and which were