

Unemployment

the equity of the owners to that extent. The arrears for the city of Oshawa, which in 1929 amounted to \$230,301, were \$601,559 in 1935. The figures for the city of Winnipeg indicate arrears of \$4,818,000 in 1931 and \$6,288,000 in 1934. For Saskatoon the figures are \$1,134,000 in 1929 and \$2,969,000 in 1935, an increase of more than 100 per cent in that city. The figure for Edmonton increased from \$1,754,000 in 1932 to \$2,130,000 in 1933. This increase represents a charge against improvements and against the homes of Canadian people. The tax burden of the municipal taxpayer has been increased because these people have had to shoulder the burden of looking after the unemployed and meeting the ever increasing interest of their public debt.

I should like now to deal shortly with another set of figures without giving them all. I have here a table showing municipal expenditure on unemployment relief and how it has grown. The expenditure on unemployment relief in the city of Montreal, for example, which in 1931 was \$2,309,000, had risen in 1935 to \$6,324,000, an increase of more than 200 per cent, an increase of more than \$4,000,000 for the city of Montreal alone. In the city of Winnipeg in 1931 the expenditure on unemployment relief amounted to \$905,750, and in 1935 it had risen to \$1,886,000, an increase of 100 per cent. In Saskatoon—and here are some striking figures—the expenditure on unemployment relief in 1930 was \$4,231; in 1935 it had risen to \$290,000, in a city of about 40,000 people. All that extra burden was placed upon the people and had to be met largely by taxation on real property and improvements, and yet we expect people faced with that ever increasing burden on their homes, the future extent of which burden is unknown to go into a building program. There is the situation, and it is something which the house should recognize. We have this ever increasing burden of unemployment; more and more homes are being sold to carry that increasing burden, and yet we expect people to go into an increased building program.

Just for a moment I should draw to the attention of the committee our attitude towards those who in the past have invested in homes and in industry in this country as compared with those who have invested their capital in bonds. Let us take a citizen with, say, \$10,000 to invest. Suppose he puts \$5,000 into a home and \$5,000 into some industrial enterprise giving work to people. We will suppose that his neighbour across the road says: I will not do that service; I will not bother risking my money in an industrial enterprise, nor will I build a house; I will

[Mr. Tucker.]

buy government bonds. Just let us see what is the difference in our attitude towards these two citizens. To-day the man who put \$5,000 into a house in the city of Edmonton, for example, will have to pay roughly \$250 a year, a five per cent tax on that home. On account of the heavy taxation upon industrial enterprise in this country a great many industries are not making anything at all with which to pay interest on the bonds they have issued, and the result is that the man who invested in industrial enterprise in many cases has lost his income from that source. How has that come about? Because above all things the dominion government has so far refused to adopt a more advanced policy in regard to banking and monetary reform. Instead they say: We will force the municipalities to borrow from private institutions at high rates of interest; we will not help them out at all in that regard. And so they have had to devote a large part of their revenues to payment of debt charges. There has also been placed to a great extent upon the backs of the municipalities the burden of looking after unemployment, without any promise on the part of the dominion government to relieve them of that burden. On the other hand the man who put his \$10,000 into government bonds draws his interest regularly, while his neighbours are being sold out. Homes have had to be sold because their owners were unable to meet the increased tax burden, yet all the while the government bondholder continues to draw almost five per cent on his \$10,000 of government bonds; in other words, his neighbour must lose his home and his position in order that he shall be paid the \$500 interest on his bonds every year. It seems to be quite all right to confiscate the capital invested in homes, but if we suggest that we should leave the bondholder his principal intact and take only some of his interest in order to lighten the burden on the home owner and the factory owner, we are told that is confiscation.

I put it to you this way. On the one hand, the home owner has his home, his capital, confiscated. There is no thought of his income, for that went long ago. On the other hand, the bondholder has his principal intact, and he howls to high heaven if you touch even his interest. You are selling out the home owner and the factory owner in order to pay interest to the bondholder.

I submit to you, Mr. Chairman, that this high court of parliament must now look that situation right in the face. It cannot afford longer to accept dictation from the financial interests of this country. It must put the best interests of the people ahead of the dictation