

ciples involved in it. These principles, I think, are two; first, that direct relief should be regarded as a federal responsibility, and second, the need for constitutional reform. Again and again we have urged these principles.

First with regard to constitutional reform, it is quite true that there is a special commission investigating the relations between the dominion and the provinces, but that would not preclude a thorough study of the situation by a committee of this house. In his closing words the last speaker suggested that we had to have a very thorough knowledge of the situation. I think that is true, and while we are having committees dealing with all sorts of subjects there is no real reason why a committee of this house should not deal with the urgent problem that is before us to-day. Suppose the Rowell commission does report in the course of another year. What then? It will lay before us a certain amount of information. It may make certain recommendations. It is then for the government to adopt the report and the recommendations. We have had a good many royal commissions in the past which have cost the country a great deal of money and which have made very thorough investigations, but this government has taken no action on those recommendations. Suppose this commission comes back and reports that there should be radical changes in the British North America Act. Is it possible that this government would recommend those changes? For years we have been recommending such changes as being absolutely necessary, yet nothing has come of the matter. This year the government is asking for one simple amendment, to facilitate the passage of an unemployment measure. That in itself is anticipating what the royal commission may recommend, and I am afraid that, like a great many other things, this particular matter will be held up.

Almost daily we are blocked in this house by jurisdictional disputes. I was in a committee yesterday where this same thing came up, as it comes up again and again. We all know that the House of Commons can do practically nothing because of this trouble over jurisdiction. In the meantime the people are suffering; the country is suffering. Why should we let another parliament pass by without taking some action? Why should not we in this very parliament, instead of seeking one little amendment to the British North America Act, claim the right to amend the act as we see fit? Until some government is courageous enough to take some such action, I am afraid various social measures are not going to get very far.

Now we come to the main question, that of federal responsibility for direct relief. I would point out that, as everyone knows, to-day unemployment differs radically from the unemployment of twenty or thirty years ago. To-day unemployment is not due primarily to local causes. It may be that there is still a small amount of unemployment which is due to individual incapacity, individual shiftlessness, laziness and so on, but we all recognize that the great mass of unemployment to-day is due to general causes, great national causes, in fact world causes. Everything in the way of improvement in the situation, according to the last speaker, is due to the actions of the Liberal government; but everything in the way of depression is due to the policies of the United States, or something else. I submit that we need to get away from that kind of party argument. Whatever government is in power is going to have difficulty with the unemployment question as it exists at the present time.

I do not intend to-day to burden the record with a mass of figures. I would refer hon. members to the statements that have been submitted by the province of Manitoba or by my own city of Winnipeg. I do not think we need go to the submissions of other provinces. The conditions prevailing in my own province and especially in my own city are almost desperate. I am not however making a plea merely on that local ground, because we are more or less typical of the whole of Canada, though undoubtedly the west is more seriously affected. I suggest that the difficulty to-day is to no small extent due to the tariff and trade policies of this country, and let me say that, despite all the protestations of the Liberal party, tariffs have not altered very materially under the Liberal regime. The trouble is due to financial policy, for which this dominion government is primarily responsible, and to our foreign policy. And when we have large numbers of the people unemployed because of the policies of the dominion government, I care not whether they are the policies of the Conservative government or of the Liberal government, the least the dominion government can do is to assume responsibility for the effects of those policies. That is the ground for pressing this resolution.

This year, Mr. Speaker, I think more than in any other year I have been in parliament, I have been almost obsessed with a sense of the futility of the whole business, with a sense of frustration. I look around this house and recognize the faces of a great many people I have come to know during the years I have been here. They are splendid men, men who