

solve the problem was to abolish day work altogether and let everybody work by the hour and work as long as he chose. Are we in this twentieth century going to allow every man to work as many hours as he likes? Are we not supposed to protect the weak members of society? That is why ten, and nine hour laws have been passed in different states of the United States. Last year, while this discussion was on, one hon. member of the House—I believe it was the hon. member for Halton (Mr. Henderson)—made the statement that this was class legislation. I would like to know what kind of legislation we generally pass if it is not class legislation. It is all class legislation. There are classes of one kind and classes of another kind, but we never specify it as being class legislation unless it is legislation in the interests of labour. It was stated that I wanted to make a lion of myself by posing as a defender of labour in this House. I have nothing to fear and I have nothing to hide in connection with my conduct and the labour movement in this country or in this House. Under these conditions it is absolutely unfair to bring such a charge against me. To command the respect of my fellow workers in this country it is not necessary, as some hon. members have asserted, to bring a measure of this kind before the House and I am not actuated by any such motive. If I have brought this measure before the House it is because I am perfectly convinced that it is absolutely necessary for this and every other parliament to study this question and study it at as early a date as possible in order to bring relief to those who are labouring to-day under trying conditions. It was stated further that the country is not quite ready for a measure of this kind. The question was also asked: Why should we give more leisure to the men who are working for the government than to others, and why should we be asked to adopt legislation of this kind in the interest of government employees any more than for any body else? That will be found on the 'Hansard' of last year. I believe that it was the hon. member for Halton who used these words. I am a young man, I am not as old a parliamentarian as my hon. friend, but I studied the rules of this House when I came here and I saw that it was impossible under the British North America Act for any body to present legislation in respect to this subject except it had reference to the men who were working for the government. When it is asked: How is it possible to grant an eight hour day on one side of the street and a ten hour day on the other, I reply that this parliament has nothing to do with that. All we have to do is to consider whether it is necessary to have a shorter day. I shall not take up the time of the house by quoting from magazines and books, but I could present

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a great deal of evidence to prove that there is an almost universal call for a shorter working day. It was stated that it will demoralize production. Are we willing to admit that it will demoralize production especially when it was proven last year that we could produce as much with a shorter day than we can under present conditions? Then, there is the question of the unemployed, and it will be admitted by all that we want to make more work so that those who are now unemployed may have something to do. But, it may be said, if you agree that we can produce as much in a short hour day as in a long one, how is it possible that we are going to give work to the unemployed? I answer by giving greater purchasing power to a man than he has at the present time. Is it not reasonable to believe that if a man is not working his purchasing power is diminished, while if you give a man a chance to work it will create a demand for larger production because he will have more means and therefore greater purchasing power. If you give more leisure time to those who now work such long hours you will give them a chance to better their condition. Is it not a fact that as soon as we improve our condition we are anxious to get a little better living. This is a perfectly legitimate desire on the part of everybody and therefore by improving the conditions of the workingman you are increasing his purchasing power and consequently increasing the need of greater production. Over production? During the great financial depression of last year, or the year before, it was said in the papers and in other places that labour was to a certain extent responsible for that great financial depression? I would like to ask any member of this House if the workers were not as steady at their work then as they were before? They were, but notwithstanding that we had depression. When depression comes over-production comes as a result of it. During the depression to which I have referred the stores were full of goods from top to bottom and every man in the country was wearing as many clothes as he was before. There was over-production because there were too many hours of labour in the different industries. With the improved methods and machinery that we now have at our disposal there is liable to be over-production, especially during good times when, in the large industries, people are sometimes working night and day. They believe they will make money by doing this. But, if they believe that they can make more money by increasing the hours of work they make the greatest mistake of their lives, because they are over-producing, and when the market is full of goods they are obliged to close our doors. If they close the door of an industry for two or three months the purchasing power of men