

The Address—Mr. H. O. White

During the period from 1942 to 1948, however, the percentage varied from 48 to 54 per cent. Those were the years when everyone was employed and the basic primary producer received a good percentage of the consumer's dollar. Now we are getting back to the point where in some particular lines—and I could mention eggs—a very small percentage is being received by the producer.

Those are the facts which must be faced at this time by this government, this parliament and the people as a whole. They are pertinent and significant facts. The picture today is very different from the picture last June. Then we had these promises of high employment, overseas contracts, buoyant revenues, stability of prices and markets. Today we have alarming unemployment figures; and even those figures are not correct, because they indicate only the number who have registered with the national employment service. There are many people who are out of work who have no reason to go to the national employment service office. They cannot find a job there, because all these other people are there looking for work.

It is noticeable also that, at the very time these contracts were being cancelled and the prices the farmers were receiving were dropping, Mr. Mosher and Mr. Bengough called upon the government to declare an emergency. They desired the government to commence a program of public works across the dominion to alleviate the unemployment situation. It would seem, therefore, that Canada's export trade markets are closely linked with the unemployment problem.

Reference was made today to widening the scope of the Unemployment Insurance Act. This matter is dealt with in the speech from the throne. On my desk there are resolutions from two of the main hospitals in the city of London, protesting against being brought under the Unemployment Insurance Act. What is actually happening is that many people are being called upon to pay into that insurance fund, without any hope of being able to collect from it during their lifetime. It has been intimated that possibly farmers and farm labourers will come under that act. How many of you know of unemployed farmers? I would urge the government to give serious consideration to the proposal to bring hospital employees under the act.

While I am speaking about unemployment insurance, may I say that an individual case was brought to my attention in London last week. This man had contributed towards unemployment insurance for a year and a half. He was considered old enough to pay into the fund, but when he became unemployed the officials forced him to prove

his age before he could draw upon the fund. If he was old enough to pay into it, I believe he should have been considered old enough to receive payments from the fund.

I must say that London is one of the most favoured spots in Canada so far as unemployment is concerned. There are various reasons for that. Because of the diversity of its industry, because of its position as a financial and educational centre of western Ontario, London is not dependent upon seasonal employment as are some of the other areas in Canada. I noticed that yesterday the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) mentioned the fact that this unemployment was seasonal and temporary. I hope it is not as temporary as some of the jobs in the civil service, because I know of civil servants who have been temporary for twenty years. If the men who are unemployed today thought the situation would last for twenty years, they would be quite disturbed. Let us find out what temporary means. Does it mean today, tomorrow or five years from now?

What are the causes of this unemployment? Probably the biggest factor is loss of trade. Fear of the future and the destruction of incentive by excessive taxation are two important causes. The excessive taxation is brought about by government waste. I suppose someone will ask me to point out this government waste. I shall just mention one case, and it is in the Department of National Defence. It has been estimated that it costs approximately \$30,000 to train an officer. This figure was supplied by reliable authorities in the educational field. Similar figures can be found in a return tabled in my name during the last session. This question of excessive taxation will become more difficult as trade diminishes, and unemployment mounts. Now, before the situation becomes too serious, is the time for the government to make some constructive move towards solving the problem.

The lack of purchasing power by all those engaged in the primary industries in this country is another factor causing unemployment. There is also the fact that we are pricing ourselves out of many markets. I should like to draw to the government's attention the fact that millions of dollars have been spent to build up Europe, while our own country, with all its resources, has been neglected. We could quite well spend all the money we have spent trying to rebuild Europe in building a better Canada.

Trade barriers are another cause of unemployment. Many of you will recall that we were summoned to Ottawa in haste in the autumn of 1947 to ratify the Geneva trade treaty. As yet, those treaties have not been