

Proposed Committee on Unemployment

in Canada at prices that could not even be touched, in one case if the workers made no charge and in the other case if the employer made no charge for his factory, raw materials, machinery or administration.

In my estimation, Mr. Speaker, it not only shows the complexity of the situation but also the seriousness of it. It also shows the need for something being done in Canada now that has never been done before, namely the placing of the cards on the table. It is no good damning the trade unions offhand in a press report if they have a delegation down here. The government has a responsibility.

I would say this to hon. members. You believe in free enterprise. Yes, all of you do, except our own group here. I do not believe you can solve this problem under your free enterprise system. But we are living under it, whether we like it or not; and we are in parliament where we have a free enterprise government, whether we like it or not. Whether or not I believe in something new and different, on the floor of this house we have a responsibility to our constituents and to our country. What is that responsibility? It is to see that every family has the ham and eggs on the table tomorrow morning.

You believe in this system and you say it can be made to work, but it is not working when there are half a million unemployed. That is your first warning; and if you are sincere, if you believe the system can be made to work, then the way to make it work is to do something which has not been done before. It is not good enough to say, as was said by the Acting Prime Minister, that one union at least has priced itself out of the market and that the workers had better find other jobs. It is not good enough for employers to say that they are priced out of the market because of government taxes and because of the standard of living of their employees. The government has a grave responsibility.

Trade unionists are sensible men and women. They know it is useless to have a union agreement providing for payment of \$2, \$2.50 or \$3 an hour if they have not a job at which to work. The employer cannot function if he does not have workers on the job, and the government cannot get its \$4½ billion of revenue if the workers are not on the job in the industries of Canada. In my estimation there is only one sensible thing that can be done under this system and under this government. Cut out all the shadow-boxing, cut out all the flim-flam, cut out all the wishful thinking, face the situation as it is now with its warning, and get together and talk things over.

[Mr. Winch.]

You may think the trade unionists are wrong, but give them an opportunity to present their case and not have them come here to meet the cabinet for just an hour and a half. Let leaders of the trade union movement, representatives of the employers and representatives of the government, which has over-all control over what is going on in the country, sit down together, consider the case, deal with facts and see what will come out of such discussion. When I began I referred to a consulting engineering job by the Acting Prime Minister on which I worked back in the twenties. When the bin floor collapsed the engineers started from the top to repair it.

Mr. Argue: C. D. never collapses.

Mr. Winch: The security of over half a million people has already collapsed. Let us start from the top to lay plans and try to check the situation. What is the top in Canada? The top is the parliament of Canada, and unfortunately parliament is under the control of the government. The government should take action now from the top. Since 1945 they have never kept their promises.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have to inform the hon. member that his time expired at 9.04.

Mr. Gregg: Mr. Speaker, may I rise on a question of privilege? I leave it to you to say whether it is a question of privilege. There are many things I could say about the speech that has just been made, but there is one point against which I must protest. Neither the acting leader of the government, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, nor the Minister of Labour damned the highly respected leaders of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada and the Canadian Congress of Labour the other day, or the members of their unions.

Mr. Winch: I did not mention the Acting Prime Minister. I referred to the statement made by the hon. member for Temiscouata.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Red Deer.

Mr. Winch: May I finish my sentence?

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: If the hon. member has the unanimous consent of the house he may do so. Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Some hon. members say no.

Mr. Winch: All I want, Mr. Speaker, is to finish my sentence. Let the government take—