

In the past a great many royal commissions have been set up to investigate various problems. We have had the Rowell-Sirois report respecting dominion-provincial relations. We have had the coal commission report, and several other commissions have investigated railway problems. The general procedure seems to have been to appoint a commission to take evidence, and then to shelve the report, doing nothing about the situation.

I believe this government at the present time should set up another royal commission, the purpose of which would be to investigate the amount of technological development that has taken place in Canada since the turn of the century, with particular reference to the development between 1920 and 1945. If that information were readily available it would afford labour an opportunity of getting a settlement for some of its present problems.

I hold in my hand an article which I clipped from the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*. This contains a report given by the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. MacKinnon) and deals specifically with Canada's foreign trade. The article states:

During 1946 the minister announced the dominion's exports rose to a total value of \$2,312 million, or more than two and one-half times as great as the five-year pre-war average from 1935 to 1939.

"It is encouraging to note that despite the elimination of these war goods from our export trade," Mr. MacKinnon said, "the volume of peace-time commodities has been maintained at a high enough level to ensure full employment in Canada's great but vulnerable export industries."

I am sure every hon. member is pleased to know the minister was able to make a statement of that kind respecting our foreign trade, particularly with respect to the aspect of full employment. That, again, is something which should receive due consideration from the house, because there is great danger that in the future our government and private enterprise will not be able to afford full employment to the people of Canada.

I note the minister has said that the providing of full employment to our people is largely dependent upon our export trade. Here are some figures which deal with that export trade. At this point I should like to compare our best peacetime year after the economic depression of 1929 with the year 1946. In 1938, which was the best year following the depression, we had in Canada 870,173 unemployed employable persons, while in 1946 we had approximately 158,000, a comparatively small figure when compared with that of 1938.

[Mr. Moore.]

But here are our present exports, for the first nine months of 1946, as compared with our exports for the twelve months of 1938. I believe the figures I am about to place on record reveal the fact that, unless we are able to maintain our trade as it is today, we shall have difficulty in the future in providing full employment. These figures for Canadian exports are as follows:

	9 months 1946	12 months 1938
Newsprint	\$187,400,000	\$115,600,000
Wood pulp	82,800,000	33,500,000
Planks and boards	79,300,000	43,400,000
Automobiles and trucks	45,800,000	22,900,000
Farm implements	22,900,000	8,200,000
Bacon and ham	51,600,000	32,300,000
Fertilizer	24,300,000	7,900,000

I believe the minister is right when he says that these exports must be maintained if we are to provide full employment in this country. But I believe other hon. members who belong to different groups in the house are right when they say that these exports will not be maintained. And they will not be maintained because the countries to which exports are made are going to rebuild. As soon as the devastated areas in Europe and Asia have been rehabilitated, we shall encounter difficulties in the marketing of our commodities.

I suggest that if we are not to face a serious unemployment problem in the future the government must now take steps to overcome conditions which may develop. The first action to be taken should be that of investigating the possibilities of establishing in our better industries the forty-hour week. That could be done, if the findings of the royal commission, the setting up of which I have just suggested, were put into effect. We could pick out our best industries where the profits are highest, and have those industries establish the forty-hour week, with no reduction in take-home pay. Then the government could go forward and maintain investment in Canadian industry from the public treasury. By that, I mean it could institute public works, reforestation programmes, highway construction programmes in cooperation with the provincial governments—anything to maintain a condition of full employment throughout the country.

It is interesting to note that in 1938, our best peacetime year, we had in circulation in Canada \$352 million, or a per capita income of \$404. Those figures have increased steadily until at the present time, they have reached an all-time high. The money in circulation today stands at \$1,079 million, or a per capita income of \$708. If that condition is to be maintained—and it must be maintained if