

now to a new distribution of work, now to the introduction of improved machinery and, usually, to the competition of those who are younger and more fit. The career of the textile worker is short-lived; it begins early and comes to an early end. The problem of the middle-aged worker is a universal one.

I am not suggesting that we should pension people at forty-five, but I am suggesting as earnestly as I possibly can that this government should do something for people who have reached the age of sixty or sixty-five, those who have reached sixty and are not yet seventy. Have you ever stood before the employment office and watched women of sixty and sixty-five on a cold, wet morning—and I am thinking of my own city of Vancouver—coming up to the office and waiting until it opens? There is no more heartrending spectacle than that, and yet we have it in every city, in every town of this rich dominion.

I would stress this point in regard to what is taking place because of machinery. I am not blaming governments, because governments have very little to do with the development of economic means. These things develop either with, or in spite of governments. I saw the point put very clearly indeed, and very neatly too, in a book which I read a few years ago and which came to my mind when I was considering what I would say on this question. The title of the book is *The Economic Consequences of Power Production*; the author, Fred Henderson, a fairly well-known English economist. On page 49 he said:

The handicraftsman has, as it were, been split up into three parts. The physical energy which he contributed to production has been superseded by the new gigantic powers: his operative skill has been superseded by the precision of mechanism, and his craft knowledge has become the technician's specialized knowledge of the reactions between these non-human factors and the materials of his particular industry. Thus the craftsman completely disappears; and what the power machine industry requires by way of labour is an altogether new function for which there was no counterpart quality in the handicraftsman at all. The mass of the workers called into existence by the new conditions as machine minders are an entirely new type, concerned neither with the technique of materials nor with the productive purpose of the machine in relation to a finished commodity, but only with the movement of the machine as a thing in itself; and with that movement only at second hand; not by effecting it directly, but by attending to the controls which admit and regulate the effective power.

That I think puts it so clearly that nothing further need be said regarding it.

Sometimes we are told that we are asking too much of government and of the state. Personally I do not agree with that. But

the question cannot be decided yes or no until we settle what is the function of government, and why it came into being. If government is something superimposed upon the people, the government of one class by another, then the government may object and say that too much is asked of it. If on the other hand government is, as I think it should be, an instrument of the people for doing for the people collectively what cannot be done by the people individually, then there is no limit to what the people may ask their government to do. To set a limit in such case would be to set a limit to progress. Questions which come before this house from day to day, a number of which have already been discussed this session, are relentlessly driving home to us the social implications of the changes taking place in the economic system under which we live. It is becoming ever more evident that the more we produce with the socially operated machinery of industry, finance and commerce, the more it is impossible for the individual to provide himself with either comfort or security. It may be said that in our working years we should provide for our old age. But to-day that is foolish, because not even a man in his prime can provide for himself. What nonsense, then, to ask him to lay by something to provide for his old age!

I made inquiry of the civil service commission as to the age factor in employment, and I am told that in the lower grades they do not take on applicants over the age of thirty-five. If the government of Canada will not take on people over thirty-five years of age because they cannot get value for the money they pay, how can we expect industry operating for profit to take on people over that age? The director of unemployment relief in Vancouver said recently, in reporting to the council, that most of the heads of families unemployed at the present time who are over the age of fifty-five would never work again. They are unemployable, and have become so because of being unemployed for three, four or five years. If people are unemployable at fifty-five years of age, we should make more scientific provision for their care than unemployment relief.

Thinking of old people I am continually reminded of a poem by Robert Burns; "Man Was Made to Mourn":

Look not alone on youthful prime,
Or manhood's active might;
Man then is useful to his kind,
Supported is his right;
But see him on the edge of life,
With cares and sorrow worn;
Then age and want—oh! ill-matched pair—
Show man was made to mourn.