

exists between the producers of wealth and the owners of the means of wealth production. However, we cannot solve that now; but we can and should take steps that will make easier the lives of the unemployed until such time as we can organize a better social system than we have to-day.

Hon. PETER HEENAN (Kenora-Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, I should like to congratulate the mover of this resolution, the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Neill), whose speech in introducing the subject showed close study and a great deal of thought. Since I have known him in this chamber, he has been in the forefront in regard to all legislation pertaining to the elimination of social injustices as well as to labour matters. I can well remember, when we were considering the old pension bill, the great assistance rendered by the hon. member in framing that humane piece of legislation and I was glad to have the honour of signing an agreement with the first province to adopt the scheme, British Columbia, in which the hon. member resides. I can also well remember the great assistance rendered by him in the way of advice to the committee on industrial and international relations.

I am sure it must have been rather a disappointment to him that when he introduced the resolution, it received from the government benches a little different treatment from that accorded any other resolution introduced by a private member this session. Generally speaking, when a private resolution is introduced, after the speech of the member introducing it, some member of the government states its position in regard to the subject matter involved. This resolution is one pertaining to the welfare of the labour men of this country and though we have been discussing it all afternoon, not a single member of the administration has gone on record even as accepting the motion which simply declares that the legislation, when it is introduced, should be national in its scope. Instead of that, they have left the task to one of the back benches, the hon. member for East Calgary (Mr. Stanley), who made an excellent speech, favouring the resolution, but in his argument pointing out every obstacle that he could imagine that would be in the way of the government enacting such legislation. Therefore I say that it must have been a great disappointment to the hon. member for Comox-Alberni and all those who so far have supported him to see the government sitting idly by, or, as the Minister of Trade

[Mr. MacInnis.]

and Commerce (Mr. Stevens) used to say, lolling in their seats, not taking any position in the matter, but leaving it to a lone back bench to state the government's position.

Mr. LAWSON: If my hon. friend will not take too long, he will give some of the rest of us an opportunity of expressing our views in favour of the resolution.

Mr. HEENAN: I did not know my hon. friend had yet joined the government.

Mr. LAWSON: The hon. member was referring to back benches.

Mr. HEENAN: This is the government whose members are hiding themselves behind the British North America Act. They asked for and received a mandate from the Canadian people to deal with unemployment and employment on a national scale. At that time the British North America Act offered no obstacles. Anyone who, during the 1930 election, would say a word about that act, was ridiculed off the platform. They said: Elect us; we will do it on a national scale; if King can give you 50 per cent old age pension, there is no obstacle constitutionally in the way of our giving you 100 per cent. This government, as I say, are hiding behind the skirts of the British North America Act and any other excuse they can find. This government received a mandate from the people to deal with unemployment and employment on a national scale; they have not hesitated to take authority from parliament to deal with it nationally; they have taken a blank cheque to deal with such matters on a national scale; they have taken authority to deal with matters of this kind under peace, order and good government legislation and they can break the bones of any interests they think fit. But when the question is one of whether they can deal with an unemployment insurance scheme, the British North America Act stands in the way. I know it will be said by speakers who will follow me, if we can get any of them roused out of their seats, that the Liberal government also used to discuss the question of the British North America Act and point out the obstacles that lay in the way. If they say that, it will be true, because we never yet tried to deceive the people of this country; we never went out to an election to try to tell them that there were no obstacles in the way of social legislation. We were honest with the Canadian people and the gentlemen who deceived them in 1930 are now betraying them, because they are going diametrically opposite to the things