

Unemployment

in the 1930's when the young men of Canada were sent to work camps and given a few meals a day and 20 cents. A dollar a day at home with which they have to provide their own meals is not much better than the treatment of the unemployed in the 1930's.

The government now says, wait and see. Maybe spring will do something, and the president of the Liberal federation insults the opposition members who are continually endeavouring to get this government to do something about the horrible situation that prevails in all of Canada. Read the unemployment statistics of almost any city in the country and you will see that the unemployment problem has created and is creating an unbearable burden on the financial resources of the municipalities involved.

Over the week end I had the privilege of speaking to an alderman from the city of Toronto. He said that over a week end he often gets as many as 50 telephone calls from persons who have no income at all and do not know where they are to get enough money to buy the next meal. I read a report in the *Toronto Daily Star* of March 26. The articles reported in that paper generally reflect credit on the government. Certainly, it is not an organ of any opposition group. Yet, it reported something that casts a very serious reflection on the adequacy of the legislation implemented so far by this government. I refer to the report headed:

2,552 jobless in city find there's no way to get financial aid.

It says:

According to Reverend J. F. Culnan, director of the Catholic welfare bureau, cases of hardship, want and suffering—where in some instances whole families with several children have been required to live on as little as \$9 a week—have been common in Toronto since unemployment worsened in December.

"Generally speaking, a person who is old or sick in Canada can count on being taken care of," said Father Culnan. "But if a person who is unemployed is able-bodied and ready to work—in other words, if he or she is employable—there is no agency to assist such a person when his or her funds disappear and still no work has been found."

Some specific examples are given of unemployed families. I shall refer to only one.

Case 2: A landscape gardener with six children, from 12 to 5 years, who lives near Spadina avenue. Up to now he always had a job during slack season. This winter he pounded on doors—no luck. The family has two rooms and a hall entrance with rent at \$19 a week. His work has never brought him within the unemployment insurance bracket. He is not eligible for D.V.A. or city relief. The family has got some assistance from the Catholic welfare bureau but there is not enough money to buy food.

I ask the government what it intends to do to provide employment for a man in that

[Mr. Argue.]

situation? There are 600,000 unemployed in Canada. There are all kinds of people who are undernourished, but still there are huge agricultural surpluses. We need more schools, more hospitals and more civic buildings. We need irrigation projects; we need public works of all kinds. The government does nothing. Many people are suffering from malnutrition. The best that the Minister of National Health and Welfare can do is to interrupt on minor points of no significance. We heard from two cabinet ministers, but not a word on what the government is going to do about the unemployment situation.

We had an amazing statement read to the house by the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe). I should like to refer this paragraph to the gentleman who holds an office in the national Liberal federation, to whom I have already referred. I refer him to a paragraph of the minister's speech at page 1630 of *Hansard*, in which the Minister of Trade and Commerce lists the factors that led to unemployment in 1954. His first statement is as follows:

This levelling off in productive activity was a result of certain new influences which began to affect the market situation in the latter part of 1953 and early 1954. Hon. members are no doubt aware of most of the difficulties encountered—a general business let-down in United States—

They used to call it a depression. That became a bad word; you should not use it; it might cause a depression. Therefore, when you are in a depression do not use the word; say "recession". Well, that became a bad word also, and they dropped it. Now it is a let-down. The next time it will be a turn-down. Somebody says behind me an adjustment. They will use a lot of words, but as the significance of each word becomes known to the Canadian people, then they will change the word and use another. The minister went on: the trouble in 1954 was caused by a general let-down of business in the United States. He continued:

—a consequent decline during 1954 in Canadian exports to that market; reduced incomes of grain producers—

I wonder who is talking blue ruin now? These are all the things that happen when you are in a depression; a general business let-down, a drop in exports and reduced incomes of grain producers. The minister continued:

—and the effects of this on sales of farm equipment and other manufactured goods; reduced procurement in 1954 of defence goods—

In other words, less armaments, more unemployment, the thing that the C.C.F. says always happens when a Liberal government is in office.