

will welcome the long overdue decision of the government to set up a special committee of the house to study the problem of social security. In my opinion this committee should be called the parliamentary social security research committee because its primary task will be research. The government should be congratulated upon having recognized the need for taking this step in the right direction. I only hope that this mountain of plans does not give birth to a mouse. I shall therefore leave any further commendation and congratulations until the results start coming in.

If I understand it correctly, the purpose of the committee is to explore all fields with a view to formulating a plan to free our people from want. This freedom from want appears to me to be the most ambiguous of the four freedoms enunciated by the President of the United States, particularly in view of the fact that this problem of want exists in the midst of plenty. To my mind that is something which is really phenomenal. Is it not strange, when science has progressed so far in every field of endeavour that the people of the world can hardly keep up with its inventions and benefits, to find that the science of government is lagging behind everything else? The people themselves must wake up to the fact that they must do their part if they want democracy to function properly. The people of this country must realize that unless they force—I use the word “force” advisedly—the governments, provincial and federal, to bring about the results which the people want, then they themselves will have to take the blame.

I see no earthly reason why the people of Canada should have to exist—they are existing, not living, because they are living a life the people of this rich land should not have to live—for a number of years under the poverty line. There is no physical reason for that situation in a country such as Canada. The motto of this group is that what is physically possible must be made financially possible, and I think that is a valuable motto to follow. We notice that the government has been concerned greatly over the various ceilings that have been in force during war time. That is rightly so because many of those ceilings are essential. But when we are discussing the setting up of a committee to study post-war reconstruction, we must see to it that one of the recommendations to be brought in by that committee shall be the providing of a floor which will protect our citizens who are climbing up the ladder of life so that they will not fall into the basement of poverty, degradation and other evils which no human being should have to face. Let us build a hole-proof floor, accommodated

with springs, which will help to raise our people to the level they should be on in order that they may live as human beings. Let us build a floor upon which the poorest and the humblest may stand in dignity, leaving to them the sky as the limit for their advancement and initiative.

In my opinion there are five main requisites or requirements which we must guarantee to our people in peace time if we want this nation to advance among the nations of the world. In any social security measure which the committee recommends after it has studied the whole field, provision should first be made that no person in Canada shall go hungry. Food is something we have too much of in Canada.

Mr. FRASER (Peterborough West): Not at present.

Mr. HLYNKA: Even at the present time we have more food than we need, and more than any other nation in the world. The first requirement, I say, is that no person in Canada shall go hungry, and the problem we must solve is to distribute the food we have.

The next requirement is clothing. There is no reason in the world why our people should go around shabby and shivering in the cold weather when we have all kinds of clothing rotting in the stores right across Canada. There is no reason in the world why our people should not have the clothing that is proper for any man who wants to preserve his dignity.

The next requirement is shelter, and here I want to quote from an item which appeared in the *Ottawa Journal* of May 5, 1942. I should like hon. members to note that what I am going to read happened in Ottawa, the capital city of Canada. This is what the *Journal* says:

Eleven more homeless children found shelter with the Children's Aid Society late Monday as bailiffs, executing delayed eviction orders, dispossessed additional low-income group families.

For one family, the situation was desperate. Bailiffs arrived at one dilapidated tenement to enforce an eviction order, and were reported to have found that the father of a family of five had barricaded the door. Behind it he stood armed with an axe, ready to use it, he warned them. They retired with their eviction order which a welfare agency reported had been issued so that the dwelling could be demolished.

Within were five children and his wife, who was being confined for childbirth. The woman was removed to hospital and neighbours took in the five youngsters.

Welfare agency officials said heads of the dispossessed families were either soldiers on active service, veterans or men with extremely low-paid jobs.