

(Text) I have so many friends both within and without this country, and especially in my own constituency, who speak the language of Shakespeare that I should be remiss in my duties of friendship and esteem if I did not say at least a few words in the language by means of which these friendships were born and nurtured. In the centre of my constituency, some fifty miles from the capital city, there lies a great stretch of uninhabited land, about ten square miles in extent, known as the plain of Kazabazua. The dense growth of red and white pine which formerly covered this plain has been completely wiped out by repeated forest fires, so that to-day this great tract of land produces practically nothing but a little grass and some blueberries. The soil is unsuited to mixed farming. I wish to ask the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) to have the soil of this plain analyzed by the experts of his department, with a view to ascertaining its suitability for the growth of flue-cured or cigarette tobacco. Should the experiments show that with the use of proper fertilizers this kind of farming could be carried on successfully, tobacco farming could be taught to those who wished to take it up. This would make it possible to place several hundred unemployed families on the land, to the great benefit of my constituency. On the other hand, should the experiments reveal that the land is too poor for farming of any kind, steps could be taken to retimber this plain, which formerly constituted a real preserve of white pine.

Last session the house voted \$100,000 for surveys and expropriations in connection with the boulevard and national park in the Gatineau hills. No doubt hon. members will be pleased to learn that the engineers have nearly completed the survey work and that within a few weeks the government will know the definite layout of the parkway and the approximate cost of the undertaking. I have neither the time nor the ability to describe the picturesque beauties of this region, close to the capital city, which hon. members will be able to admire in a few years, after the boulevard is finished. I desire however, to ask the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dunning) to include in the supplementary estimates a substantial amount in order to get the work under way and thus relieve unemployment and distress among the poor people of the southern end of my constituency.

(Translation) We are living sir, in very difficult times. Economists, sociologists and statesmen seek remedies to the economic evils affecting our people.

Unemployment has been acute since 1930. I admit that it reached its peak in 1933.

After that year, the number of persons under relief fell steadily from year to year. However it is still the most serious problem which our government must face to-day.

Successive governments have tried various remedies. I understand that the British North America Act prevents the present government from establishing unemployment insurance which would form the essential basis of a partial solution of unemployment.

The report of the Quebec Social Insurance Commission contains the following words, at page 203, on the subject of unemployment insurance:

Is it possible to establish unemployment insurance on a provincial basis in a federated state such as Canada? The answer is in the affirmative, for the example of Queensland, Australia, and of certain Swiss cantons prove the possibility. However, ordinary prudence suggests that unemployment insurance should be federal in character. It is very advisable to spread the social responsibilities over the whole country, for otherwise, the provinces which participate find themselves in a condition of inferiority with respect to the non-participants. It must not be forgotten that the expenses involved in social legislation should be incorporated in the net cost of production. If certain provinces do not enjoy the benefits of tariff protection, the industrialists of those provinces must of necessity aim at an equality in social obligations if they do not desire to embark on a policy of rivalry which is not only impossible to maintain, but is unfair.

Moreover it is easily understood that the establishment of unemployment insurance in only one province would prove a great attraction to the unemployed in other provinces and that this social measure would soon prove a complete failure. One must take into consideration the absence of boundaries between the provinces and the natural facilities of moving about in the country.

For that reason, I am in favour of a constitutional amendment on that point. However, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding all their good will, governments cannot solve that serious problem by themselves.

Let us point out also that the responsibility of finding a remedy for unemployment does not fall only on the state. All citizens, and especially those who control the sources of production and the distribution of wealth, manufacturers, merchants and bankers owe it to themselves to collaborate first of all, and then assist the state in finding a solution, so necessary, for a national problem.

Ever since my election as a member of this house, I have heard groups of members suggest that the whole problem would be solved if monetary reforms were proceeded with, and if the purchasing power of every one were increased. I may say, Mr. Speaker, that the evil is not so much in the present monetary system as in the wrong use that is made of purchasing power.