

And again—

The quality of our citizenship is not improved by the presence in our city of thousands of under-nourished little children, hundreds of cold and cheerless homes, many families forced into the streets because the rent cannot be paid.

Are those statements correct? If they are not I think it is the duty of the government to correct them. If they are correct, it is the duty of the government to introduce such legislation as will make it impossible that those conditions should continue.

Again the speech from the throne goes on to state:

It is gratifying to note that during the year the foreign trade of Canada has shown further marked improvement.

I am sure we all rejoice in that statement, because as a whole we have taken it that trade returns indicate a substantial betterment in general conditions. On the other hand, I sometimes wonder why we are so solicitous about our foreign trade. I sometimes wonder why we do not spend a great deal more attention in developing the home trade. We cannot do that unless we increase the buying power of the masses of the people. There it seems to me is one of the solutions of the economic problem which faces not only this country but all the countries of the world to-day. In this connection, just to show that a good many people outside the labour movement are thinking along these lines, I should like to quote a paragraph from one of the papers of my own city, the *Winnipeg Tribune*. I might say this paper was a supporter of the Conservative party during the last election so that I cannot be accused of quoting from any organ that is particularly favourable to my own position. The editorial reads:

Home Markets Needed

The American Federation of Labour is getting down to economic fundamentals, when it asserts that "the best interests of the whole social group are served . . . by high wage standards which assume sustained purchasing power to the workers, and, therefore, higher national standards. In other words, the more money the masses of the workers have to spend, the greater will be the home market for the goods which they produce."

Again it says:

It is curious that nations should fight for foreign markets and should spend vast sums of money in building up semi-civilized people to the point where they will become customers, while they have right within their own borders masses of people in real need of the things they have so much difficulty in selling. It should not be difficult for an economist to show that what the over-industrialized countries should do to find a market for their "surplus"

production is, as the American Federation of Labour suggests, to increase the purchasing power of the masses at home.

That particular phase of the economic question has of course been given a considerable amount of emphasis in magazine articles, and the experimental work of Mr. Henry Ford has perhaps served to draw popular attention to the possibilities. I commend that suggestion to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. It is quite possible to stimulate prosperity in this country by developing our home markets.

Reference is made to adequate provision for the civil service. We all want to look after the civil service, but may I ask why we do not begin some of our economies right at home. I should not like to suggest the abolition of the Solicitor General (Mr. Cannon); he is too genial a man. I would, however, like to suggest the abolition of his office, as was suggested a year or so ago. I do not know why it is that the government seems to have settled back again and to be apparently determined to take no action along these lines. Again and again it has been suggested that we might have various consolidations of departments. All of us, I suppose, have considered ways in which this might be done. I mention the consolidation of the Public Works department with the Department of Railways and Canals. Half a dozen other consolidations will readily occur to almost any member. Why should we persist in a very considerable measure of extravagance with regard to higher officials when we are constantly talking about the necessity of exercising economy across the country?

May I venture to suggest one or two things that have occurred to me—and I am sure to many others—in connection with the recent elections? Why should not the suggestion of the Chief Electoral Officer be carried out in legislation this session, and electoral officials be appointed for a considerable period of time? So far as I am concerned, I should like to take the electoral machinery out of party politics altogether. We had a struggle last session between the two major parties partly at least because each was determined to get hold of the electoral machinery. Why? It may have been that each was not intending to use that machinery illegitimately; but each party was decidedly afraid the other would. There we have the situation. Why not take the electoral machinery out of party politics altogether?

There is another inquiry I should like to make of the Prime Minister, but again I note