

there is no possible limit to the size of our population. I can see no reason for doubting that in the years to come this country will be able to support a population of two, three, four or even five times the present population, and at the highest standard of living. But when we admit immigrants the question is whether we can assimilate them. There is not likely to be much trouble in this respect with people who come here intending to make their living as farmers. In my province farm immigrants, those who came there many years ago as well as newcomers, have proved very satisfactory.

Of course, I should like to see as large a proportion as possible of our immigrants from our two mother countries, Britain and France. Those who come here from Britain will be understood and welcomed by English-speaking Canadians, and immigrants from France will be just as warmly received in Quebec and other parts of the country where French is spoken.

I hope my fears are not well founded, but I am afraid that we are running into a period of greater unemployment than we have had in the past three or four years. This may be the fault of the working people themselves, but our responsibility in the matter is very great.

Throughout the history of this dominion the federal parliament has refused to accept its full responsibility for dealing with unemployment. True, it has made a forward step in increasing the unemployment insurance benefits of many persons; but even though that will give more money to the unemployed, it is not an answer to the problem. I wish I could share the optimism of the Prime Minister; but I believe that while some of the unemployment may be seasonal much of it is not. I am deeply concerned about the threat of unemployment in our large cities, such as Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver, and perhaps in even the smaller cities.

One has only to read the press of this country today to know what has happened in Great Britain during the past month and a half. Throughout the election campaign everything was touched upon but the important issue of how that country was going to produce goods and how it was going to sell them—and that is a situation that we have to face. I do not propose to say anything further on that, except that before we start bringing in immigrants in large numbers we should have a clear statement of policy from the federal government.

If there is to be a period of unemployment in this country, the dominion government must undertake to relieve that condition. Our

municipalities are not able to meet any more than a temporary lull in employment, and the provinces, with their limited incomes, cannot take care of long-term unemployment. As to the rise in municipal costs, I need only point to my own city of Winnipeg, where in the past ten years the cost of education has been more than doubled.

**Hon. Mr. Leger:** More than tripled.

**Hon. Mr. Haig:** I am being conservative. The entire burden is placed on the property owners, who today are the people who pay the taxes. If there are relief payments to be made in a city, it is the property owners who pay them through taxation.

I am all for proper immigration procedure. I can still hear ringing in my ears the statements of the honourable member from Blaine Lake (Hon. Mr. Horner), who spoke in this chamber some years ago about the difficulties that confronted him when he started farming in the West. But our problem today is what to do with men and women in the cities who become unemployed. I admit that I have not got the answer.

I recall that during the last depression period a man walked down Portage Avenue in the city of Winnipeg, smashed a window in Eaton's store and took out a loaf of bread. That man had at home six or seven children without food, and there were not enough policemen in the city to arrest him. I was a member of the legislature at the time, and I said "I have children at home, and if they were hungry I too would smash a window for food". Some people said that I should be thrown out of the legislature; but I remained, notwithstanding my remark.

I am all for giving the people of Europe who have been removed from their homes and threatened with communism a chance for a better life. I am even willing to give them those opportunities in Canada. But that is only the first step in a policy to settle this country. I intend to vote for the resolution, but I want to be sure that when the committee reports back to this house we will have an announcement by the government as to what it will do if, after we bring these people here, there is no work for them and they drift into the cities.

I am not a labour man, nor do I say that men and women who work with their hands and cannot get work are not sometimes to blame, but I do not intend to stand idly by and see people starve in this country. I repeat that I will vote for the resolution, and I will attend the committee meetings as regularly as I can; but before the report is received by this house we ought to have a declaration as to federal government policy on the question of unemployment.