

duty at the Imperial conference in London, and we allowed these acts to pass without sufficient analysis or discussion. The Prime Minister with his colleagues went to the Imperial conference, leaving us with a lavish promise that there would be free and open discussion at the next session of parliament.

The next session commenced on the 12th day of March, 1931. Every representative came to Ottawa with the idea of hearing something of what should be done to cure unemployment in Canada, because we know at that time it was worse than it had been since he assumed the reins of power. As I say, the house assembled on the 12th day of March. On March 20 the hon. member for North Winnipeg (Mr. Heaps) rose in his place and asked the ministry if any special measures were contemplated to cope with the unemployment situation. There was no answer from any member of the cabinet. On March 23 the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Heenan) rose in his place and asked what the government intended to do with regard to unemployment in his constituency. There was still no answer. The Prime Minister said that the question could stand. On March 31 the hon. member for North Winnipeg rose and moved the adjournment of the house, but his motion was ruled out of order. On April 17 the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River again brought the question before the house, and failing to get a satisfactory answer from the government, he moved the adjournment of the house, but the motion was defeated. This was the manner in which we were allowed a full discussion of the problem of unemployment.

On April 24, the hon. member for Bow River (Mr. Garland) asked whether the government intended to call a dominion unemployment conference. The Prime Minister replied:

The hon. member will be advised when the event happens, if it does happen.

On May 25 the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Neill) directed the attention of the government, and particularly the acting Minister of Labour (Mr. Gordon) to the desperate condition existing in the city of Nanaimo over the matter of unemployment, and urged the government to deal with the situation immediately. The minister said that the matter was purely a provincial one, and this in face of the fact that during the election campaign, as I have said, the Prime Minister had stated here and there throughout Canada that this had become a national problem and we should deal with it in a national way.

On May 26, on the motion to go into committee of supply, the hon. member for Comox-

Alberni discussed the urgent necessity of holding a conference. A lengthy debate followed, but not a word was uttered by any member of the government. On June 8 the hon. member for Comox-Alberni brought the matter once more to the attention of the government, but the Deputy Speaker ruled him out of order. On June 29 the hon. member for Kenora Rainy River again brought up the matter and the Prime Minister replied;

At an appropriate time a statement will be made. . . . The primary duty with respect to unemployment does not rest with the federal government.

That shows the way in which he scrapped the theory which he had announced to the electorate of Canada during the whole period of his election campaign, of ending unemployment by federal means.

On June 30, the hon. member for Willow Bunch (Mr. Donnelly) directed attention to the appalling situation in Saskatchewan, and the Prime Minister replied:

The primary responsibility . . . rests with the municipal authorities and the province.

This is the manner in which the government continued until July 29 when legislation was introduced. The Prime Minister then said:

What alone concerns us is that many of our people are now in want, and unless extraordinary measures are taken many more will know hardship and privation in the coming months of winter. Knowing this it becomes our solemn duty to aid them. In the short session of parliament last September and in the one now drawing to a close this government did all within its power to strengthen our economic structure and to repulse the wave of world-wide economic depression which was then upon us.

I would say that the effect of all his work has rather been to plunge this country into the most desperate economic and unemployment condition which exists to-day. I can tell the Prime Minister that in my section of Ontario there is a decided feeling of scarcely concealable unrest and dissatisfaction over the way in which the government has been administering the affairs of this country, more particularly along economic and unemployment lines.

On a recent occasion when I visited my own home I met one of the most prominent citizens, a lifelong Conservative, but a man of sterling integrity. He had represented his township at the county council for many years. His first expression was: "What are you fellows doing down there at Ottawa?" Of course, I explained to him that we were tied hand and foot, that we of the Liberal party could do nothing, that we had a Prime