

as we have a huge financial debt, it is impossible for the government to use the resources of the country to satisfy the needs of our returned soldiers and others. If any government, regardless of its complexion, accepts a statement of that kind and fails to do the right thing, it will be absolute tragedy. It is a fact proven by history many times over that when the government of a country contemplates any major scheme of action it must procure permission somewhere. I have seen, in my short experience in this world, that statesmen are oftentimes dictated to; politicians are oftentimes dictated to; even journalists and jurists are dictated to, with the result that so frequently we have members of parliament saying, "I feel so frustrated; I came here with an idea that we might be able to do something really worth while." That frustration must be traceable to something; we must undertake to ferret out the cause of it.

Some hon. members may have an inkling of what I am leading up to. I have in mind the words of the Right Hon. David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of Great Britain during the last war, when, speaking of a certain phase of post-war reconstruction, he made this astonishing and astounding statement. Before I read it, let me say that I do not believe there is anyone in this house who would question the source of the statement, or who would be so bold as to question the fact stated. He said:

The international bankers swept statesmen, politicians, journalists and jurists all on one side, and issued their orders with the imperiousness of absolute monarchs who know that there is no appeal against their ruthless decrees.

I am satisfied that the Right Hon. David Lloyd George put his hand directly on the cause of the frustration which many governments experience when they undertake to solve some of the major problems with which they are faced. I say that the only solution of our post-war problems lies in our determination actually to give this dominion economic democracy. It will be quite an experience for the people of this country, and I believe it will be quite an experience for the country itself, because I am one of those who subscribe to the idea that while we have had our political democracy, economic democracy has yet to be experienced. It is utterly ridiculous for the government of Canada, or the politicians of Canada, and the thinkers of Canada, to allow themselves to be held in serfdom to the exigencies of any financial policy which may be dictated to them, because stooping to a condition of serfdom is not something very much to their credit or something that should be looked upon with any feeling other than one of disgust.

[Mr. Shaw.]

If unemployment, with all its associated evils is to be banished from this fair land of ours then I say that the government will have to face the issue. The government will not succeed in that endeavour by bringing down innumerable orders in council, many of which are quite irrelevant. The government will not succeed in properly establishing our boys who return from the war if they do not face facts. Therefore I say, let us once and for all wake up to the fact that the chaotic condition with which we were confronted in this country between 1929 and 1939, and many of the difficulties with which we are confronted at the present time, can be traced directly to a financial system which in my estimation is neither democratic, Christian nor humane. I realize that this is rather a strong charge. I realize that to say that a financial system is not democratic is a serious statement to make. To say that it is not Christian is also serious, and to say that it is not humane is equally so. But I have yet to hear any member of this house, particularly any hon. member who associates himself with those on the other side of the house, stand on a public platform or rise in his place here and endeavour to prove that there is anything democratic, Christian or humane about our financial system.

In order to substantiate one or two of the remarks I have made, let us go back to that period from 1929 to 1939. I believe it is directly associated with the problem now before us, because surely we learned something from that period which we can utilize in meeting the conditions which will prevail later on. During those ten years there was nothing wrong with the productive ability or capacity of this dominion or of its people. At that time I had an opportunity to see a goodly part of this country, including agricultural, mining and various other areas. For the life of me I could not see anything wrong with our ability to produce. On the other hand I saw something seriously wrong with our right to consume. At that time we had a vast abundance of real wealth on every hand, yet we saw the national debt of this country increase by leaps and bounds until it reached the staggering net total of something in excess of three billion dollars. The financial institutions of this country did not worry very much about those twenty cents a day relief camps. They did not worry very much about the soup-kitchens or our young men riding the rods, to use the common western expression. They did not seem to care very much about the loss of homes, farms and businesses.

Let us take the present period of war, and I should like to make just one observation.