

country in the world, socially and economically, but where there is a growing feeling of discontent on the part of an increasing number of people of all classes, and decreasing confidence in the power of their institutions to cure their evils.

My purpose in speaking to-night, heaven knows, is not that I believe that I can offer any cure. In the sincerity of my heart, as a Canadian unconnected with political parties—which may be a fault; I am not putting the parties on trial—I am simply stating what I feel; and in doing so I believe I express the thought of a large number of people in all the provinces of Canada. It is this: could there not be a truce between the fighting groups in parliament and outside of parliament in order to try for something other than merely the retention of power or the conquest of power?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. BOURASSA: Of course my friends of the Liberal party will claim that they were defeated by an appeal to the feelings of despair of the people, that they were slandered before the people of Canada because they happened to be in power at the beginning of the crisis, and that their opponents must suffer the deserved retribution for what they did in 1930. There is some truth in that. But do they in the bottom of their hearts believe that if they come back into power this year or next, they are by themselves capable, without any moral support from some people outside of their party, either in parliament or out of parliament, of doing any better than their opponents? No, they cannot. I wish to be fair to everyone. I hope I have no enemies in this house. I was a strong fighter in my day, for a short time as a party man and for a long time outside of parties, alternately with and against both parties. But in my growing age I have come to the conclusion that there is more good in each party and every party than their opponents will admit, and sometimes than even their own friends believe. But with the party system, with its traditions of party strife, with the conviction—is it a conviction?—in each party that they must charge their opponents with all the faults and crimes and errors of the past and claim for their party the credit for all that has been done that is good; with that system you cannot expect the growth of a public conscience, intelligent and constructive, and you cannot expect an increase in the confidence of the people.

May I be somewhat personal and address myself to, I shall not say the three leaders of

[Mr. Bourassa.]

the different parties, but the leader of the government (Mr. Bennett), the leader of the opposition (Mr. Mackenzie King) and the chairman of the new cooperative association? May I say quite frankly that I have much admiration and sympathy for the three of them? The Prime Minister I have known for over twenty years. Were I not afraid of hurting his extreme modesty I would say that I have the deepest admiration for him. I do say, however, quite unreservedly that he is one of the strongest-willed statesmen we have had in Canada. I will go farther and state that he has a clearness of mind, a quickness of thought and a strength of action which has rarely been possessed by any man loaded with the responsibility of office. I give that credit to him with the greatest of pleasure. But, he knows that he is but a man; he knows that. I believe I could state more accurately than many of his fellow members that I fully understand his desire to do his duty by his country. I know he is public-spirited; I know that he gives the best of himself to what he considers to be his task. But I repeat that he is a man, and only a man. If the whole problem was that of maintaining what he calls sound money or of giving to the country an effective administration in matters of finance and commerce I have no hesitation in saying that I do not think he has his equal in Canada at the present time, and has had very few in past days. But the maintenance of the dollar, the development of trade and the increase of our exports and imports, is not the whole problem; he knows that. That is not the whole economic problem—still less the social problem—it is much more than that. When you deal with nations, with communities composed of millions of men, women and children, you have to consider something more than material problems. You have to take into account what Bismarck, a statesman who was never styled as a dreamer or a poet, called the imponderables, without the consideration of which no statesman can rule his country and entertain proper relations with foreign countries. I state to the three leaders that they must take into account the feelings, the needs, the habits, the requirements, not only material but moral and social, of all the elements of the community. In that regard I appeal to the three parties in this house. They consider primarily the interests of the classes they represent, some having at heart the interest of the farmers, others organized labour, others the interests