

creased production, if I call your attention and the attention of the House to the fact that very large numbers of our fellow-citizens are living below the standard that is necessary to maintain health and decency. I do not know that our own employees, the civil servants, are very much better off. Let me read from an editorial in the *Ottawa Citizen* of January, 1926:

In the session of parliament, 1922, Mr. McQuarrie, in answer to a question, received the information that 19,467 employees of the Dominion government received less than \$960 per annum.

That is, government employees were receiving only about what is the average wage in the manufacturing industries, and which is only about half what is necessary, according to government and other investigators, to maintain a decent standard of living in Canada. In that same editorial the *Citizen* goes on to comment on this state of affairs. It says:

Political and economic leaders are accustomed to lay great stress upon perfection in the production of material commodities of all kinds. Appropriations and statistics in parliament are largely confined to the increase of material wealth and the pursuit of gainful occupations for profit—that is, for the almighty dollar. The development of our natural material resources is no doubt of great importance. It may well be asked what is the ratio between the importance attaching to the development of material wealth and the care and cultivation necessary for the improvement of the human existence. While our economic system is grinding out wealth, how fares the great mass of struggling humanity during the process?

Now, Mr. Speaker, may I ask, since it requires, according to the figures presented to the committee, something like \$2,200 to maintain an average sized family in decency, and the average wage paid in this country is only \$959, how is the difference made up? Because the majority of the families do manage to get along on less. They sometimes save on food, and we generally pay the bills through contributions we are making to the hospitals and other institutions. They may save on houses, and we have the overcrowding that exists in so many of our larger cities, which again leads to deterioration in the life of the family, and we very often have to pay again through our hospitals and other institutions. Very often the difference is made up by the earnings of the husband and father being supplemented by the earnings of the wife and children; the effect is to mortgage the next generation, and we have another generation coming up with very little education, fit only for blind-alley occupations and very inadequately equipped

[Mr. Woodsworth.]

to meet the strenuous conditions of modern life. I submit the time has come when this parliament will have to fall in line with the parliaments of other great nations, especially with the parliament of the mother country and with some of the colonies, for instance with New Zealand and Australia, and give a little more attention to matters of this kind.

I would commend to the attention of the House a resolution that has been placed on the order paper by my hon. friend for North Winnipeg (Mr. Heaps) which reads:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Committee on Industrial and International Relations be instructed to investigate and report on the establishment of a system of insurance against unemployment, sickness and invalidity.

The speech goes on to state:

It is gratifying to note that during the year immigration has substantially increased.

We have discussed the question of immigration in this House again and again and it is not my intention to go into this matter to any great length, but since the railroads and the boards of trade are on every hand emphasizing the need for increased immigration, I would like once again to utter my protest against increasing immigration without taking greater care of the incoming immigrant and the men already here. It is very easy to permit immigration to be used simply to overcrowd the labour market, as to supply fares for the railroads and a sale for the lands of the west. I am glad to find that the departments are beginning to talk about colonization instead of immigration. It is a move in the right direction, but we will have to go a great deal further in practical provisions before the situation is at all satisfactory. It is a disgrace to civilization to have brought before us the pathetic stories that fill the papers in nearly all our cities about this time of year. We have appeals not only for a Christmas dinner, but at the same time we have little glimpses into the wretched conditions under which a considerable part of the population must live. I do not need to go outside of Ottawa. Here is a newspaper clipping of a date no later than December 2, a statement by the Social Service Commissioner of Ottawa, who says:

We are told repeatedly that Canada needs immigrants. The transportation companies have a large interest in stating that our prosperity will be increased in proportion to the number of new citizens who come to our shores. It seems a reasonable assumption that the further importation of men would aggravate the present situation. If we need further labour during the summer months, it might be feasible to import men in the spring and send them home again in the fall.