

*Relief and Agricultural Distress*

standards and hours of labour, and these improvements raise production costs. The manufacturer must have protection which protects, or go out of business. Surely he is entitled to a condition whereby he will have fair competition, and protection against dumping. But he knows he will get no action until it is too late. Had action been taken by the government to prevent dumping even as late as last November or December, we would not now be approaching the maelstrom of depression in which the United States now is. Action should be taken right away. Due to the stabilizing effects of the Ottawa agreements passed by the late Conservative government, we might not become involved as deeply as we did in 1930 and 1931. However, if four or five months of dumping takes place, it will take two or three years to recover.

This government is inviting Canada to step into a tail-spin with the United States. In October, November and December, when the indication of recession first became apparent, the urgency for action arose. Was there any action? In the closing months of the last Liberal administration, the early months of 1930, the handwriting of the approaching of the depression was on the wall; but the Liberal government then in power took the same attitude the present government is taking. They had ample warning, and I must add that action is as necessary to-day as it was then.

The condition with respect to employment is getting worse, and something will have to be done. The warning has been given, but there are none so blind as those who will not see. I hope sincerely I am not right in what I cannot help thinking and feeling from the indications, namely, that we are fast approaching another bad depression.

We now have before us the report of the employment commission. An efficient Department of Labour working in cooperation with the minister should have anticipated a great many of these recommendations, and acted upon them. Two and a half years has been lost. There has been a lot of theory, but nothing worth while. To my mind, any attempts which have been made in connection with unemployment, as a result of government action, have had about as much effect as one would bring about by pouring a pail of water into lake Ontario.

Chaos—where did I hear that word? I think the expression “King or chaos” is changing rapidly to “King and chaos.” If we do not have proper and constructive action, we shall have much greater chaos than we have to-day.

[Mr. Ross (St. Paul's).]

The people of Canada want work the whole year round. They do not want to work half the year only. Our people want to eat and live decently. Farmers want markets. We know that the best market is the home industrial market, and that the farmer cannot be prosperous unless the industrial worker is prosperous. We must keep our Canadian workmen employed, because relief is repugnant to them. A lack of industrial work means a poor market for the farmer.

This government is doing its best to destroy the home market by refusing to stop dumping into Canada. It is giving work to foreign workmen. It would be better to import the workmen and increase the market for Canadian consumption. By its lack of effective policy in industry it has broken its pledge to the electorate. It has betrayed its trust and shirked its responsibility. The cabinet, the board of directors of the country, should be held responsible for gross negligence in trifling with the livelihood of the workers. It has sacrificed secondary industry for concessions in connection with natural resources. Again I ask this question: Are the workers off the relief rolls and on the pay-rolls? Have the workers who elected the government been given proper treatment? Those gaily printed cards and flaming billboards should have read: “Get off the payroll and get on the relief roll; King and chaos.” The mayors of Ontario are not now making irresponsible threats, as was intimated by the minister a short time ago; they are stating facts.

Mr. J. C. LANDERYOU (Calgary East): Mr. Chairman, it is reports like that of the national employment commission which have created a feeling in the minds of the people of Canada that the setting up of commissions is of little value; for in this report we find that no careful analysis has been made of the situation to ascertain the real causes of unemployment. The three hour speech of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Rogers) contained no concrete proposals for the abolition of poverty or the settlement of this great problem of unemployment, and I was consequently not surprised to hear that the provincial premiers, particularly the premier of Ontario, were not satisfied with the results of the employment commission. The premier of Ontario said that the speech of the Minister of Labour was a headline and a headache:

Asked if he had any intimation of the nature of Ottawa's relief program, Mr. Hepburn said: “I must confess I am not in the confidence of the government at Ottawa.”