

*The Address—Mr. Mackenzie King*

policy, if it can be called such, of providing a dole instead of work in order to meet the situation during the coming winter.

With regard to the conditions which have resulted from the policies put into force by hon. gentlemen opposite, I quoted figures on trade. I had intended to give further statistics with regard to car loadings and other indices to show the trend of business, but I think that all of these are so well known and so apparent as to render unnecessary exact quotations in order to confirm the statement that business instead of getting better has been growing steadily worse ever since hon. gentlemen opposite began to apply the remedy of higher tariffs, which remedy they believed to be the effective one to meet the prevailing situation.

I should like to give some figures with respect to unemployment. I do not intend to quote a large number of statistics but only sufficient to illustrate what has taken place since my right hon. friend began to apply his remedy of an increased customs tariff. Let me give his own estimate of the number of unemployed, made at the time he took office. When introducing the resolution with respect to unemployment relief on September 10, 1930, my right hon. friend is reported on page 64 of Hansard as saying:

I am giving the figures as they were submitted to the gathering—

That is the employment service council—

—which met in this city on August 21. It will be observed that the present number is something over 117,000 and it is believed that that number will approximate 177,000 during the winter. If the measures which we submit to this house are productive of the good which we anticipate, we hope that that number will steadily decrease, rather than increase, and that the maximum anticipated number of 177,000 will not be reached. There are those who estimate the number higher than that.

And again:

They place the figure at approximately 200,000.

And then again:

The figure of 200,000 would seem to me to be almost incredible in this country at this time.

The Prime Minister's belief was that it would be incredible that there would be 200,000 unemployed in this country shortly after the time his administration took office. Since then various estimates have been given of the number of unemployed. They range from 500,000 to 700,000; I think one of the professors at the University of Toronto made the statement that the number would reach 726,000. That statement has been questioned, and I do not wish to put on record any figures to

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which exception can be taken. I think I am wholly within the mark when I say that at the present time there are over 500,000 unemployed in this country. I believe that both the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada and the Department of Labour would put the estimate at considerably above that figure. It is rather singular that the government apparently has no information upon this subject. I endeavoured to secure from the Department of Labour the total number of unemployed, but I could get nothing of a definite character. I am right I think in stating that from year to year the speeches from the throne have been asserting that conditions in Canada were improving, but we are faced nevertheless with the fact that the number of unemployed has increased from 200,000 since this government came into office to over half a million at the present time.

While the government has no figures with regard to unemployment, the bureau of statistics keeps a record of the numbers employed in certain industries which report to the government. Many industries employing fifteen or more persons report to the government month by month and these figures appear in bulletins published by the department. By comparing the different bulletins it is easy to discover the relative increase or decrease in employment. These bulletins are most illuminating and perhaps better than anything else indicate how the government's policy has affected the employment of persons in those industries which were actually in operation when hon. gentlemen opposite took office. While these bulletins do not give the number of unemployed they do give the number of employed within certain registrations. As these bulletins do not deal with industries employing under fifteen persons, the type of industry which would be the first to go to the wall, it is quite safe to assume that the figures given therein would be minimum figures. The records indicate a steady decline in the number employed by the firms reporting to the bureau and I intend to give the number reporting on September 1, 1930, on September 1, 1931, and on September 1, 1932, as well as the combined working forces for each of those years. On September 1, 1930, there were 7,334 firms which supplied data to the government. They indicated as having in their employ a combined working force of 1,023,033 persons. On September 1, 1931, there were 7,798 firms supplying data. That is an increase in the number of firms, but the combined working force had fallen to 972,537. On September 1, 1932, the number of firms supplying data was 8,007, a still larger number, but