

Mr. ROGERS: My right hon. friend will remember that at one time he said that if governments did their duty there would be no unemployment. I venture to suggest he would not say that now. After all, we have learned a great deal during these last few years.

Mr. BENNETT: Within the last five months I should say.

Mr. ROGERS: I do not think there would be very much value in imposing upon this commission the duty of discovering the causes of unemployment. After all, we are faced with a condition. We are all profoundly interested in finding a solution for that condition.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: If you cannot diagnose the disease what is the use of trying to get a cure?

Mr. ROGERS: Does my hon. friend think for one moment that he could get seven men in this or any other country to agree as to the diagnosis of the situation in which we find ourselves to-day?

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I submit in all seriousness that if we cannot get substantial agreement it is useless for us to appoint a commission to go blindly ahead in an endeavour to locate the evil. The minister went to considerable length the other day in trying to convince us that we had to classify these unemployed according to age and occupation and all that sort of thing. What is the use of doing that unless you have some idea as to how you are going to tackle the problem? It is ridiculous for us to set up a commission without charging them with the task of attempting to find what is wrong.

Mr. ROGERS: My hon. friend will surely acknowledge that the situation in which we find ourselves is not one which is confined to this country.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Quite so.

Mr. ROGERS: That has been conceded now for some years.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: But we have to deal with the situation in this country.

Mr. ROGERS: Quite so. But is he suggesting, then, that this commission should be given terms of reference similar to the terms of reference which have been given to committees of the League of Nations during the past few years, and none of which, so far as I am aware, has led to any certain and generally accepted conclusions as to what are the causes?

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I suggest that there are both local causes and general causes. It seems to me that in some parts of our

country there are local causes. The leader of the opposition to-night mentioned seasonal unemployment. We know that to be one cause, but I think we ought by this time to see what we can do to lessen the amount of seasonal unemployment.

Mr. ROGERS: I agree.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: There is one particular thing that could be done. It is a long time ago since they tried to dovetail one employment into another so that the total employment would be stretched over a longer season. That is one aspect of unemployment.

Mr. ROGERS: That is covered, I think.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: There is another thing—technological unemployment. There is not much doubt that a good many people are being thrown out of work by new types of machinery constantly coming into use and displacing groups of workers. Something should be done to see that men who are thrown out of work by such technological changes are reabsorbed. Some of them might be absorbed in new vocations. Re-education might be undertaken. I have mentioned one cause of unemployment to-day. There are a great many more, as well as the more general causes. Since we must look to the government to solve our great problems, and there are now one and one-third millions of people in the unhappy condition of being on relief, I think it is stupid for the government to go on blindly, year after year, merely classifying the people and giving a little temporary relief in the hope that something some day will turn up. Surely, living in an age when we have some of the elements of science in our being, we ought to apply some of the principles and the technique of science to a problem such as this. I do not think we are asking too much in suggesting that a commission specially set up for this task should undertake to make some inquiries as to the causes and give the results of their investigation. We might learn a good deal from the League of Nations, even though there is no consensus of opinion. We have to deal with the problem here in this country, whether we draw our information from the League of Nations, or from other countries, or make original studies. The least we can do, if we are going to remedy this condition, is to seek the cause. I can hardly understand the minister's hesitation to include that among the duties.

Mr. POULIOT: The hon. gentleman who has just spoken has mentioned science. I do not believe in science because very often