

*Employment Commission*

such as this should be formed. May I say, that in all these matters we have to rely as to the best course upon what maybe regarded as reasonable in the minds of reasonable people. I am sure of this, that if provinces and municipalities are unwilling to allow their efforts towards relieving unemployment to be correlated with dominion effort or vice versa, the public of this country will not feel that the dominion government should go on voting public moneys to be spent in any sort of way. We have got now to where it is absolutely necessary that all public bodies should know what other public bodies are spending and how they are spending it, and they seek to get some uniformity of method and standards with respect to relief and the conditions under which public moneys are to be given for purposes of employment. That is simply a reasonable attitude to take towards a problem which has assumed vast proportions and which if it is to be presented to public bodies, as it should be presented, will require something in the nature of the advisory and supervisory powers such as this national commission will, we hope, afford.

Mr. MITCHELL: May I ask the Prime Minister, if trade and industry do not revive as he has expressed the hope and desire that they will, and taxation and borrowing for relief purposes become increasingly unbearable until they are finally impossible, what then is the solution that the Prime Minister would have to offer?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I hope that situation will never arise. If unfortunately it should arise, of course this House of Commons will have to consider it, and it will be very thankful to my hon. friend for any solution he can offer under those circumstances.

Mr. MITCHELL: May I suggest that that situation is just about here now.

Mr. DUNNING: On the point mentioned by the hon. member for Kootenay East (Mr. Stevens) I should like to say a word, because a wrong impression, one which I am sure he did not intend, might be caused by his words, particularly with respect to two matters. One is that of leadership, and the other that of housing. With regard to leadership, possibly my view would differ from his as to the extent of leadership which it is practicable and sound for a legislative body such as this to give in connection with the ordinary business and industrial activities of our people. I can link that up with the housing experience of Great Britain, which has been referred to many times during this session. The

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

British parliament endeavoured through five sessions and by five different methods to give leadership in housing through various forms of state aid. Housing has proceeded in Great Britain at a greater rate and is recognized as being more progressive than in any other country in the world. Only a very small proportion of the housing is being carried on under the various state schemes now in operation in Great Britain. The great bulk of it has been carried forward by the degree of confidence and leadership inherent in the people themselves, by the abolition of fear and the creation of confidence in the minds of men and women who have a little money, who need a home, to spend that little money in cooperation with the money of the state, possibly, in order to acquire that which they need. That is the sort of leadership we need in this country. We need confidence on the part of those who could do things by cooperation if only they did not fear so much.

We hear questions such as those asked of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) by the last speaker: "If this goes on"; "if this gets worse"; "if taxes rise," "if debts increase"; "if industry gets worse, what will happen"? When questions like that are asked in this House of Commons they have the effect of instilling fear instead of hope in the minds of our people. I believe we can generate in this house leadership of a type to instil confidence in our people who have the ability to cooperate with each other and with governments. I believe we can instil confidence in such measures as this parliament passes, for instance the housing act. I admit that this act is not perfect, but surely it is a little premature for criticism. Little was possible under its provisions prior to the coming into office of this government five months ago, and it was necessary to do a great deal of negotiating and ironing out which is still going on. I am pleased to report that the applications for housing loans are steadily increasing day by day and week by week. I do not expect them to get under way with lightning speed and if they did I would suspect that something was going wrong. They are getting under way and along with that improvement is the evidence of improvement in housing outside the scope of the act, such as is the case in Great Britain.

I agree with the hon. member for Kootenay East (Mr. Stevens) that we need leadership, but if we sow the idea that leadership in the actual executive work of business and industry must all originate in this chamber or with government, I do not believe we will ever get anywhere. Our people are noted for