

cause when resolutions already on the order paper are discussed we will be able to deal with these matters specifically. I am going to devote the time which is at my disposal now to some of the arguments put forward by the Prime Minister last night, and incidentally there are no other arguments from the other side to answer. Perhaps the silence of the government benches is more eloquent than any arguments they might have put forward. I appreciate that it is very difficult for the government to defend its policies in the light of the present situation, and I do not say that it is altogether the fault of the government. I am prepared to admit that the situation with which the government was met when it took office was very difficult, but I say that the actions of the government have not improved matters at all. Instead, things have gone from bad to worse, so that undoubtedly this administration has been faced with the greatest task to confront any administration in the history of Canada. I appreciate that fact. I do not wish to offer any carping criticism but the situation has become so desperate and the condition and the temper of the people are such that it is necessary for us in this corner of the house to speak without equivocation.

During the course of his remarks last night the Prime Minister made reference to nostrums, to sound money and to the use of a printing press in regard to the paying of our foreign debts. These phrases, which mean so little when analysed but which may stand for so much when reiterated by such an authority, ought to be met, not with sounding phrases and tinkling cymbals but with facts, and the only things that are accepted by us are facts. First let me take a few moments to deal with the excuses which were put forward by the Prime Minister for present conditions, excuses which were also given by the leader of the opposition when he was in office, and which I presume will be used by the next government if it continues to attempt the impossible, namely, to make the capitalistic system work.

The first excuse given was that this is a universal condition, that Canada is not the only country suffering from unemployment, great debts, low prices for commodities and so on, but that in fact all the countries in the world are in a similar position. And so the inference is that if the governments of all countries have failed to find any solution for the economic problem of our time, surely it cannot be expected that Canada alone can find such a solution. Now of course we have to admit that the problem is universal; and why? It is universal because

[Mr. Irvine.]

capitalism has built up an artificial international interdependence. How did capitalism do that? The answer is that under its profit philosophy capitalism must, of necessity, develop in each country a surplus of goods which it cannot sell at home and for which, therefore, it must seek some foreign market. Capitalism was responsible for an artificial internationalism which we have to recognize to-day. But has that anything to do with the present problem of Canada?

What are the fruits of capitalism which are so international? The first is a concentration of great wealth in the hands of a few; the second is the growing army of unemployed who are displaced by machinery and by more modern methods of production; the third is a growing progressive indebtedness which not only has not been paid but never can be paid, either by the individual or by the public. Of course these fruits of capitalism are universal, since capitalism itself is universal. But again I ask, what has that to do with the immediate and pressing necessity with which we are faced in Canada?

Canada has a population of ten million. It has an abundance of food, an abundance of clothing, and an abundance of coal for power and for keeping us warm in this cold climate, and it has an abundance of material for building homes. Now let us stop there, because I believe that most Canadians this winter would be fully satisfied, for the present, if they had food, clothing and shelter in abundance. Well, what does this government—and the same question may be asked of all governments in the civilized world—say in these circumstances? It says to the people of Canada, "It is true you have produced a great surplus of food, but unless we can sell that surplus of food to someone outside Canada our own people must starve." That is the philosophy of this international capitalism.

I say that regardless of international interdependence the Canadian government must, out of the abundance of our natural resources, out of the abundance of our production, find a way to give to every Canadian food, clothing and shelter and the right to work for these things, or else confess the bankruptcy of the Conservative statesmanship of this country. The excuse is given that Canada is no worse than any other country, and this I readily admit. Canada is certainly no worse than any other country although she ought to be a good deal better. I am not sure that she is, but she certainly should not be worse. But what kind of excuse is that to a hungry man? Suppose the Prime Minister and I were taking a trip across the Atlantic and at midnight we both