

*Mr. Semple:* Sir, I wish to join with Mr. Morton in congratulating the committee on the lines of the recommendations in its unemployment proposals. I agree with him that the thing we have to do is to find useful employment for our young men in this country. If the Government would take up this proposal seriously and push it, I am satisfied that it would be a blessing conferred upon the nation as a whole, as well as upon the hundreds of our boys who cannot find suitable work to do. I am in a position to know just how serious the problem of unemployment, especially amongst our young men, is in this Dominion; and if we could devise ways and means whereby when leaving school and college these young men could be given an agricultural education and settled on the land of this country I am convinced that it will be far better than allowing them to wander the streets and swell the ranks of the unemployed. If you can take the boy who is budding into manhood and give him useful employment to develop body, brain, and courage, it will be far better than leaving him to become a loafer, and sometimes unemployable. I say it advisedly, that naturally and inevitably, in the course of time, if the period of unemployment is long enough, these young fellows drift into such a channel, into such a state of mind, that they do not care whether they work or not. The responsibility is upon the State, I take it, to find employment for them; and these proposals seriously suggest the need for the State doing so. I hope that this Conference will adopt this report, and for the sake of these young men and for the sake of this Dominion and its industries will hammer away at it until this Government or some other Government takes it up quite seriously. If the Conference does so, I am quite sure that it will go a long way towards solving our unemployed problem.

*Mr. Purtell:* Sir, speaking especially on clause 2 of these findings, I want to compliment the committee on that recommendation; but I would suggest that the necessary information for the compilation of accurate data can better be got from the employers than from the unions. I have had correspondence with the Government Statistician with regard to the returns from my unions as to how many members are unemployed, how many are sick, and the number of accidents, and so forth, and I have pointed out to him that, with the exception of the number of accidents, accurate information cannot be given by the unions. Men get discharged and sometimes do not get their clearances from their unions, and we often do not know whether the men are unemployed or not, or where they are. Often, too, we do not know when they are sick. The employers, however, can give the necessary information to the Government Statistician. I am keenly disappointed that there is not a joint recommendation from both sides with regard to unemployment insurance. I have no wish to reflect on the gentleman on the other side, and I think that if I could put those twenty-five gentlemen in the position of men I know in Auckland at the present time—men with wives and children dependent upon them, who have to go out and try to get jobs—they would think it very necessary to have unemployment insurance. I know one man on relief work at Hikowai who has been rained off a time or two. He has got a wife and four children dependent upon him, and if he gets all he can—£1 7s. a week—he has to keep himself and keep his home going at Auckland, and that is quite impossible. The system of relief work at present cannot possibly be productive of lasting good to the people. There must, I contend, be some scheme of unemployment insurance. It is admitted by both sides that there is acute unemployment in the country at the present time, and as we get more immigrants the difficulty must increase. Without going fully into the matter and taking up too much of the time of the Conference, I do appeal to the gentlemen on the other side to go into the matter before we finish this Conference, even if we finish this week-end. If these people are to live, they must have the wherewithal to purchase the commodities with which to live—food, shelter, and clothing; and I suggest, with all due respect to the other side, that this matter has not been given the serious consideration it deserves. Before the members of this Conference go to their respective homes I do hope there will be a chance given for this sub-committee of seven men from each side to meet and see if something more cannot be done in regard to this matter.

*Mr. F. R. Cooke:* Sir, there was a period in man's history when the question was asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?" I wish to draw the attention of all people to the fact that these are questions on which we have to take the imperative stand that we are our brothers' keepers. In the present state of society in New Zealand, in view of the present condition of affairs in regard to unemployment, it behoves us to make some effort to solve the unemployed problem. Our future citizens, the children of the men who are unemployed, are at stake. Their health, their stamina, their life, their whole future are in the hands of the nation; and we should certainly acknowledge that we are our brothers' keepers, and solve this problem to-day, not in the future. There is no time to investigate now, and we cannot leave the problem as it is. We must have some temporary measure adopted immediately to deal with the present problem while the necessary investigation is taking place. There are all the data from other countries to go upon, and there is no need to investigate here before dealing with the problem that faces us to-day. There are more men than there are jobs for, and there should be something provided for those who have not got jobs.

*Mr. Tucker:* Mr. Chairman, I must contribute my quota to the expressions of appreciation from both sides for the work of the committee which brought down this report on the unemployment question. Although it may not go so far as we on this side may have desired, how many men in life can have all they desire? All that we desire is far and away beyond our ken or our securing within this mortal coil, though we may get it on the other side. In any case, I must say that this committee has made a fair attempt to meet the immediate situation; and, in my humble opinion, this report represents a long step towards the desired goal. I have not the least doubt that difficulties had to be met by the committee, and one of the most serious of the difficulties that stand in the way has been here clearly shown to us—the lack of data, the lack of information that is most essential. We must know where we are going, what we are doing, and what will be the results of what we are doing, before we can solve the problem as a whole. But I am very glad to find that it is recommended that immediate steps should be taken to meet the position. Those of us who are in touch with the