

On my return to Vancouver over the Easter recess I made some inquiries about the unemployment situation and here is what I found. Out of the Vancouver office alone, in January, February and March, \$4,789,000 was paid out in unemployment insurance. That fact indicates a rather serious situation in Vancouver. We also find that, under the orders of this government which calls itself humanitarian and interested in the people, all supplementary benefits under unemployment insurance were cut off as of April 15. As of April 15, in the Vancouver office alone, 4,300 were cut off any help from the federal government. We also find that, within four days of the supplementary benefits being cut off in Vancouver on April 15, 80 applications for assistance were received by the social welfare department of the city of Vancouver. We also find that between March 1 and April 13 in Vancouver there were 575 applications from single, homeless, employable unemployed men, all of whom, outside of 22, were taken care of by the city of Vancouver. There were 4 single women who made application and 105 heads of families.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Gregg) is not here nor is the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) but some cabinet ministers are present; I am going to ask those cabinet ministers who are here this question. In view of your decision that there shall be no supplementary benefits after April 15, when 4,300 were cut off in Vancouver on that date, was it your expectation that there would be 4,300 jobs on that date? If not, what do you expect those 4,300 men and women to do? Do you expect them to starve to death? You are not prepared to take any action. Eighty have applied within four days after the closure. We do not know what is going to happen from then on, but since the beginning of the year the province and the city have been taking care of the employable unemployed, something which I maintain is not the responsibility of the province of British Columbia or of the city of Vancouver. Time after time members in this house, myself included, have maintained that the responsibility for the employable unemployed is that of the dominion government. The matter has been raised time after time. It was mentioned by my own house leader when he spoke in this debate. Mr. Speaker, I can think of no way whatsoever in which the government can get away from its own promise. I know that I have mentioned this matter before but I am going to keep right on mentioning it until this government has the decency and the honesty to carry out its own promises. I cannot see how the government can get away

from its promise in 1945 when they asked the provincial governments to sign tax agreements. We signed them. I was one that agreed to it. At that time the dominion government said this, as found at page 43 of the green book proposals:

The dominion government would accept responsibility for ensuring that there shall be provided a reasonable minimum payment for the maintenance of employable unemployed persons . . .

Mr. Speaker, I think it is an unfortunate situation in this country when we cannot trust the words of government. I am going to say this. Because of the words, not of this government but of the party that was the government, we signed the provincial-dominion agreements under false pretences, and the provinces and the municipalities of Canada at the present time are carrying burdens which rightfully belong to the dominion government. Although you have heard this time after time since November 12, you are going to keep on hearing it, Mr. Speaker, until this government fulfils its promise to take care of the employable unemployed. Why should British Columbia or the city of Vancouver have to be responsible for the employable unemployed? They have accepted the responsibility to the extent of 575 applications already from employable unemployed from March 1 until April 13. They have covered 105 heads of families. They have covered a number of single unemployed women. It is not our responsibility, Mr. Speaker, and I am going to keep on speaking about the matter until the government fulfils the promise it gave in 1945 in the green book proposals.

Mr. Speaker, it was my privilege to be able to go back to my home constituency over the Easter recess. I want to speak about some of the things I discovered on that trip. I am sorry that the minister in charge of our post office system is not here now. I hope that his parliamentary assistant is here. I am going to make this statement. I have been in the trade union movement since I was 17 years of age—I am now 47—and I think I know something about that movement. I think I know something about trade union contracts. I am going to say this. In my estimation the Post Office Department of the Dominion of Canada is getting a most odorous reputation, namely that of being the most despicable and disreputable employer in the entire Dominion of Canada. I mean that. In the past we have heard on the floor of this house a great deal about the need for increasing the postal rates in Canada by one cent right down the line so as to cover the increased cost of wage increases to postal