

*Unemployment*

of the consolidated revenue fund or by way of guarantee, grant financial assistance to any province to enable the province to provide for any expenditures for direct relief or other relief measures, up to an amount not exceeding in the aggregate the total amount which may be otherwise payable to such province under any agreement entered into under the authority of this act.

Mr. BENNETT: The word "otherwise" makes it difficult to understand.

Mr. CHURCH: The words added make very little difference to what I have to say. This parliament is going to pay in any case, whether loan or guarantee. I wish to offer a suggestion to the government. In limiting these advances for these relief works to the provinces, making agreements with the provinces and then going on to make agreements with industries and even individuals, they pass over the main factor in the situation by not making direct loans to the municipalities. I suggest that after the word "province" in the second line of the section there should be added the words "or municipalities," say those over 50,000 or 100,000.

Now I wish to say something about the suburban worker. When these agreements are considered I hope the government will not overlook the condition of the suburban worker, who seems to have no friends in this house at all. The farms round the larger cities are taken over by speculators. It would cost very little for the government to make agreements with the larger municipalities, many of which own their own public utilities, light, power and transportation. The country owns the national railways. The government have made agreements with the railways; why can they not make agreements with the municipalities to develop suburban areas? The railways have had all kinds of hand-outs and they have failed to do anything for the suburban worker. See what is done in England for the suburban worker, in the city of London, and also in the large cities of the United States, with the steam suburban service and commutation tickets. In these relief construction works the federal power has the say.

Before this section carries I desire to draw the attention of the committee to these agreements with the provinces in their relation to the larger municipalities of the country. I mean those of over one hundred thousand population that are solvent. In my opinion, this government should have the power to deal directly with them, similar to what they did in 1919 in the first housing legislation. Nearly all the money advanced under that was paid back by the solvent municipalities; and a similar arrangement could be made to

[The Chairman.]

take care of rehabilitation and the relief of unemployment, and the promotion of an agricultural settlement in its relation to the suburban worker and his rehabilitation. Under the proposed arrangement the federal parliament will supply credit for the whole thing. Some of the provinces are not in the financial position they should be.

The industrial worker in the city seems to be entirely forgotten. We find that one clause in the bill makes no provision for agreements with municipalities. We know that municipalities have been carrying a big load of relief costs. All municipalities across the country have been doing this, with the result that much of the load has been placed on real estate. I say that the present measure imposes charges on property, something which we have no right to do. If a war was being fought we would not ask the municipalities to shoulder the cost of maintaining our magnificent navy or army. But in the present instance we load the whole burden of relief on the freeholders. That is what we do when we have an industrial war. For three months this federal power has been sitting at Ottawa loading charges on real and personal property owners, and on agricultural communities as well. No wonder we are facing the condition described by the last speaker. I trust the rights of the property owner will be considered. The bill states that there will be provision for land settlement, agricultural development and rehabilitation, and indicates that there will be development, conservation and improvement along those lines. If that is the principle of the bill, then let us have a real conservation scheme.

What are they doing in the larger cities of the United States to-day? They are doing something for the suburban worker. He is enabled to get out to the country. He may use the railways and other services, and all because of a vast scheme of suburban conservation. Boston, Chicago and many other great American cities are taking these people from their slum districts and placing them on two-acre or three-acre lots where they may grow enough to maintain them for some months. That is better than having the government make agreements with the provinces. The action taken by the cities in the United States is practical, and it is helping the suburban worker. It is helping those young men who are on the threshold of life to go out and get three-acre lots, and is better than having them live in slums. If we were to adopt that policy parliament could provide the money for tools and cash advances sufficient to help them for two or three years, if necessary, till they become independent.