

*Unemployment Relief*

part of the maintenance of adequate equipment and efficiency. I also maintain that all shop repairs should be done regionally.

I should like to say a word now with respect to agriculture. As has been pointed out, the unemployment situation is more serious than it appears on the surface. In this connection I might quote the words of a prominent labour man:

"I do not regard capital expenditure on public works as a solution of unemployment", boldly confessed J. T. Foster, vice-president of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada. Mr. Foster has just returned from conferences of world and empire Labour delegates at Geneva, Stockholm and London, and was a bit fed up with superficial remedies. Relief by creating work, relief by direct distribution of cash, the equitable division of whatever work exists—all essential in the present crisis. But Mr. Foster evidently hoped that a national discussion of the disease would have something to say about the fundamental economic laws which make relief necessary at times like these. He hoped that the delegates would not permit the detail of providing relief in the present emergency to fill up the whole horizon and blind them to the crying need of something more than spasmodic efforts at seasons when the situation was more than ordinarily grave.

I am sure all hon. members must have read in the Canadian Press despatches reports of the meeting of the trades and labour congress in Regina. In this regard there is one item of especial interest which I studied thoroughly:

The limitation of the hours of labour to not more than eight hours per day and five days per week on all government works and contracts and all works towards which the federal government may grant aid as a measure of relief carried on by provincial governments or municipalities.

I do not think it would be practicable to apply the eight-hour principle in every case, but I do think that it should be put into effect in connection with all work performed under any money granted by the federal government for the construction of highways and so on. In northern Ontario the poor settlers work for 30 cents an hour without board, and a man with a team of horses cannot receive more than from \$5.50 to \$6 per day. Furthermore, it must be remembered that almost 50 per cent of his time is lost owing to weather conditions. Under these conditions, therefore, it is absolutely impossible for these people to make both ends meet. In my opinion the least they should get is \$4 a day with \$7.50 for a team of horses and driver. I hope to be able to discuss this question at greater length on another occasion, because the solution of the unemployment problem lies in part in this matter. The same situation which we have to deal with in

[Mr. Bradette.]

the older rural districts we also find in the newer sections of northern Ontario. In North Timiskaming the young people are not inclined to stay on the land, on account of lack of inducement. In the last ten years there has been a movement on foot under the provincial authorities to provide a subsidy for people deciding to settle on the land, and I venture to say that if such subsidies had been granted ten years ago there would not to-day be a man out of work in northern Ontario. I believe that this principle should be applied generally throughout Canada. Without attempting to prophesy, I am positive that under such a scheme it would be easier to keep the younger population on the farms. To-day, however, the young people are finding their way into the cities, and by no means have all who have left the country districts found their way to the United States. They find it more attractive to settle in the large industrial centres such as Quebec, Montreal and Toronto. As a matter of fact, fifty per cent of the urban population to-day comprises people who were formerly on the land. It is obvious, therefore, that one important feature in any attempt to remedy the present situation will be to find some way to help our rural population and to make it possible for them to remain on the farms.

Some newspaperman who visited northern Ontario last year to attend a banquet given there—I have forgotten what part of the country he came from—made the statement that the pioneers in the newer sections of Canada showed signs of deterioration; he said that they were not of the same calibre as their forefathers. That is absolutely false. There is no such evidence of deterioration. The fact is, however, that the younger people are naturally finding life easier in the urban centres; their hours of work are not so long. The other day a farmer in the vicinity of Cochrane asked this question: How can I hope to keep my sons on the farm when they can drive into the town of Cochrane where they can work shorter hours?

I trust that the Prime Minister will find it possible to include, in the legislation under which this money is to be voted, some means of improving conditions so far as the farmers are concerned. It is of the greatest importance that something should be done for that class of the population. After all, Canada is, and will remain for a considerable time to come, primarily an agricultural country. I heard an hon. member ask a very significant question; he wanted to know whether the government would consider the