

*Unemployment Relief*

more tersely, and if I read that it might also answer my hon. friend's question. It is as follows:

Without restricting the generality of the terms of the next preceding section hereof, and notwithstanding the provisions of any statute, the said sum of \$20,000,000 may be expended in constructing, extending or improving public works and undertakings, railways, highways, bridges and canals, harbours and wharves; assisting in defraying the cost of distribution of products of the field, farm, forest, sea, lake, river and mine; granting aid to provinces and municipalities in any public work they may undertake for relieving unemployment and reimbursing expenditures made by provinces and municipalities in connection with unemployment, and generally in any way that will assist in providing useful and suitable work for the unemployed.

The basis of these measures is work, not charity. It is to provide employment for wages, and not for doles. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre yesterday said that it was undesirable that this country should engage in the payment of doles. May I venture to remove some misapprehension that may exist on the part of some of the members of this house as to the use of the word "dole". The word "dole" was not the original term used, of course, in connection with the payment of unemployment insurance in Great Britain. The unemployment insurance fund was created from contributions by employers, the employees, and the state, but as unemployment increased the fund diminished, and at the present moment that fund in Great Britain owes, not millions, but hundreds of millions of dollars to the state; and inasmuch as the number of unemployed in Great Britain is something like 2,000,000, it follows that some time ago when the number exceeded 1,000,000, they began to use the term "dole", because they were payments being made from a fund that was bankrupt and dependent for its borrowings upon the state to enable it to continue to make payments. I think that my hon. friend from Winnipeg North Centre correctly dealt with that matter yesterday, but sometimes I hear the word used in an entirely erroneous way with respect to matters of this kind.

Mr. BOURASSA: Was there not something further? Did they not continue to pay sums to people who had been contributing and then ceased?

Mr. BENNETT: As the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) knows, the legislation passed at the last session of the imperial parliament as a matter of fact lessened the period of time within which there should be no employment to make a claim upon the

[Mr. Bennett.]

fund and did continue part payments to some who had—shall we say?—only equitable claims, or perhaps moral claims; that being the method used to deal with unemployment by payments rather than providing work, although an effort was made in that direction.

Mr. IRVINE: Will any part of this \$20,000,000 expenditure be conditioned upon similar amounts being expended by the provinces, or will it all be expended entirely by the Dominion government upon works to be specified later?

Mr. BENNETT: May I say to the hon. member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Irvine) that such works, the cost of which under our constitution is properly chargeable against the Dominion, will continue to be so chargeable, but that it was not thought desirable to impose by legislation conditions upon the provinces and municipalities having regard to their financial condition at this particular time. I may say that the figures I gave were not only supplemented from the labour offices, but the municipalities themselves having a population of more than 10,000 are responsible for the figures I have quoted. I should say that in answer to my hon. friend the former Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) to whom I did not make the matter as clear as I should have.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: How is it proposed to allocate the amount between the various provinces?

Mr. BENNETT: It is not intended to undertake that duty by this measure, but rather that the administration of the act shall be of such a non-political character that each particular claim will be dealt with on its merits without regard to any other consideration. It may be, for instance, that some of the provinces with smaller population may have relatively a larger claim upon this fund than the larger and richer provinces. There is no other way in which it can be equitably dealt with in this country at the present time.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Who then will administer the act; will it be administered directly by a particular body or by a government department?

Mr. BENNETT: It is proposed to commit the administration to the Department of Labour, but it is not intended that the federal authorities shall assume responsibility for the work of the municipal and provincial organizations; they should determine the extent to which relief should be granted, and upon their determination, subject to review