

*Unemployment Insurance*

to exact facts, that is, information supplied as to the two million people who may be affected by this bill, to lay the foundation upon which may be predicated—

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): Where does it say that?

Mr. BENNETT: As I said an hour ago, all this bill does is to enable the commission to gather the information.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: It is the foundation, the part that is underground; it cannot be seen.

Mr. BENNETT: The foundation is here; the superstructure will appear in the estimates. That is the way this matter will be dealt with. That is the reason I suggest to the committee that this is an extremely valuable provision, providing for aid in respect to the health of the people of this country. But as the hon. gentleman for East Hamilton said, you cannot do this by just jumping at it and saying: this is the way to do it. You must take cognizance of the fact that each of the provinces, except possibly one, has established a most complete system of care of public health, and some have established health insurance schemes. We propose to deal with it on a national basis in the manner I have indicated.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I must say just a word, since the Prime Minister has undertaken to reprove me for using violent language—

Mr. BENNETT: Far from it.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I did not consider my language violent, but I hope I can use strong terms to describe what I believe to be the actual situation. The hon. member for St. Boniface was inclined to think all in need of medical assistance were being dealt with. I have not intended to make any attack on the doctors; I think they have given valuable service, but I would say to him that all people in need of medical service are not by any means being dealt with, not by any means.

Mr. HOWDEN: They have only to apply.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: No, much more than that. I have not been in social work in my own city of Winnipeg for many years and travelled throughout the west for the last twenty years without being made acutely conscious of the very serious situation that exists. People who have considered themselves independent frequently put off seeking medical assistance simply because they can-

[Mr. Bennett.]

not pay for it. I know scores of such cases. It is these people who are perhaps in the most needy position to-day. The service that they need is not being given. I had a case the other day, not in connection with a medical doctor but a dentist, of a boy who needed a tooth fixed; the regular charge was \$65. I submit that charges of that kind cannot possibly be paid by the ordinary people of this country.

Mr. MOORE (Châteauguay): They do not have to be.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I am just giving a particular case of which I happen to know, and that was the regular charge.

Mr. MOORE (Châteauguay): Find other dentists who would not charge \$65.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: It may be possible; I have heard of cut-rate dentists. But I am not discussing medical or dental fees, I desire only to point out that a great many people are in need of medical care who might be looked after by a proper health insurance scheme. The Prime Minister rather implied that I want to scrap the provincial schemes. Nothing is further from my mind. I think the provincial schemes will have to be dealt with, just as I think the constitutional question will have to be dealt with. But these are minor matters compared with the primary responsibility of caring for the needs of the people. I quite agree that at its basis it is a financial matter, for the individual and for the municipalities that have to provide relief. But we have the source of financial strength here in the dominion government, and I think we have suggested one means by which the finances could be provided. My hon. friend from North Winnipeg suggested grants in aid. I do not think there are any provinces which would refuse to accept grants in aid. If any were wealthy enough to refuse it, or if their idea of their constitutional rights was so high as to lead them to decline the grant in aid, such a province need not be included, but the rest of us are sorely in need of something of this kind. The point I tried to emphasize before and that I must continue to emphasize is that there is a very large number of our people who to-day are in sore need of medical attention but who cannot obtain it. I think it is a distinct responsibility of this government to provide more adequately for the health of the people of Canada.

Section agreed to.

Sections 40, 41 and 42 agreed to.