

*Unemployment Relief*

been made to the western provinces, and there have also been grants. I have the list upstairs; I have not brought it down to-day.

Therefore, sir, to bring these observations to a conclusion, is it not possible for the department to make a classification of the unemployed, differentiating between unemployables and employables, and to enable the provinces to provide sufficient relief to the unemployables so they may live and be looked after if they are sick, their families not being allowed to starve during that period. On the other hand the employables should be separated from the unemployables so that advantage may be taken of skill and ability to work, with consequent benefit to the state. The example of New York is very good. I fear, sir, that in the branch of the federal department which is charged with relief, as well as in the provincial and municipal relief departments, there are officials who live on the distribution of relief and are opposed to work relief. I do not know about it, but I ask the minister to make an investigation on these lines. Of course, what has been given there has been given. It has been distributed to a certain number of people, but they have been enabled just to exist. I want the settlers in my county to be fairly treated when they are on land which is not productive.

I hope the minister will consider seriously the matter of supplying work to necessitous people. It is a very bad thing, as he knows, for persons to remain idle; idleness is the mother of all vices. It is important for the men who are employable, who are able to do something, to have an opportunity to work, and it is necessary for the welfare of the state that that opportunity should be given them.

Reverting to what I said a minute or two ago, I regret that the work which was done by a single member of parliament, with his secretary, was not done by the employment commission, when upon that commission were men like Arthur Purvis and Tom Moore. I regret it very deeply. The work they did was useless, and I threw that report on the floor of the house because there was not a waste-paper basket near my desk. These are the men who are supposed to give us lessons in matters of welfare and relief. No, sir! There must be order among the unemployed; there must be order among every other class of Canadian citizens; there must be order in the distribution of relief. I hope that the Minister of Labour will stay long enough in the department to carry out the policy which is necessary for the welfare of the country.

[Mr. Pouliot.]

Mr. DONNELLY: I did not intend to say anything on this bill, but since so much has been said in the house in the last few days with reference to the question of relief I feel it my bounden duty to say something in connection with farm assistance and relief. I have had the honour for the last eleven years to live in the constituency of Wood Mountain and to represent in this house the people who live in that riding. That constituency has had the misfortune during those eleven years to have but one crop out of eleven. Ten crops were lost, all but one through drought. One crop was lost because we had too much moisture and the crop was ruined as a result of rust. Last year we had the first crop in eleven years. The result has been that a prosperous and thriving community of farmers who had been well off have found themselves almost destitute and have had to live on relief. If anyone knows what it means for farmers to live on relief, I ought to know as well as anybody in this house, because the farmers in my constituency have a reason for being on relief. They have been living in the centre of the dried-out area of western Canada. I have seen them all around me, on all sides, having to go to municipalities, to the province and to this government for assistance.

Let me say on this occasion, in regard to the relief question, what I have said before in this house. In the administration of relief, the conditions are contrary to what some members have said. The hon. member for North Battleford (Mrs. Nielsen) made the remark that someone had said, "If you do not vote for the government you may be off relief the next day." That has never been true in my constituency; it has never been true under either the Conservative government or the Liberal government. There has been no politics federal or provincial in the administration of relief. If there has been any politics at all, it has been on the part of the municipality. Sometimes one of the councillors has a friend living next to him and has been lenient in giving him relief.

Mr. BROOKS: The hon. member is speaking of Saskatchewan?

Mr. DONNELLY: Yes, I am speaking of the district that I know, in the province of Saskatchewan. Sometimes the municipal officer has a neighbour whom perhaps he does not like very well and he cuts down on his relief.

How is relief administered? As far as we are concerned as a federal government, we have nothing to do with the administration of relief. Relief is first of all a matter for