

actions on the part of those contractors who have their plants established and who are going ahead with the work in good faith?

Mr. PUGSLEY: Is it not true that in all the contracts of the Public Works Department, and, I think, also in all the contracts of the other departments, it is provided that, where the appropriation is exhausted, the contractor has no remedy, but must wait for further appropriations or can go on and wait for his money until Parliament votes it?

Mr. WHITE: I am surprised at my hon. friend, who is a lawyer, putting forward an argument of that character. It is true that in most of the contracts there is that clause. I will suppose my hon. friend to be a contractor—and he knows something about contracts. He has assembled a plant and has spent \$1,000,000 or more on his plant, and has several thousand men employed. Does my hon. friend mean to say that when a contract is entered into, although there is a saving clause of that character, the Government of this country is entitled to say to the contractor: "Quit work, and suffer whatever loss you may sustain?" Such action is absolutely unjustifiable.

Mr. PUGSLEY: The Government has done it frequently.

#### WOULD SIMPLY AGGRAVATE THE SITUATION.

Mr. WHITE: Some consideration might arise which might make it expedient to follow such a course; but if the Dominion Government closed down its contracts and threw thousands of men out of employment, what would be the next duty of the Government? To start relief works throughout the country in order that the men might not starve. As Minister of Finance I have had requests from provinces and from municipalities to assist them or to attempt to increase their credit with financial institutions in order that they might take care of the wholly abnormal situation respecting unemployment forced upon them by the war. An appeal was sent out yesterday to the Dominion Government and to all the provinces and the municipalities to create a great fund for the purpose of taking care of the unemployed.

We had a member of the Opposition—and the curious thing is that the Opposition have such an elastic policy on this as on all other questions—we had the Mayor of Montreal the other night not protesting against our continuing public works, but asking us to go on with more public works. Hon. gentlemen opposite speak about our extravagance and the works that we have undertaken. The right hon. leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for South Renfrew (Mr. Graham) within the last year or so have said: Yes, we are in favour of the Welland canal; go on with it; and in addition to that, go on with the Georgian Bay canal. What is the attitude of hon. gentlemen opposite with regard to expenditures? Have they been wise in their day and generation? Did they foresee this war? If they did, what accounts for their action in 1912? If we were to close down those public works, we should simply aggravate a situation which is bound to be serious enough in war time, and we should not save the expense, because we should have to establish relief works in order to relieve unemployment. It is a fortunate thing for the people of this country that they have in office at the present time men who do not become panic stricken, who do not lose their heads, who do not say: Stop all the public works in this country; but who say: We will proceed with such work as will afford employment and with those works especially which, at the present time, we have under contract for completion, having regard to the honourable discharge of our