

Supply—Labour

ten thousand men. I am still worried, however, because the *Financial Post* of December 3 has this to say with respect to that announcement:

New financing for Labrador-Quebec iron ore development from six major steel companies as announced this week by Jules R. Timmins . . . will be followed by an immediate start on the 360-mile railroad . . . Work this winter will be on the tote road—not the actual rail line.

But it won't mean an immediate "10,000 new jobs for Canadians" as heralded this week.

That is very unfortunate; but we are also faced with the problem of secondary industries closing down. Only this week in reading the Newfoundland newspapers I saw that five secondary industries had closed within the last week or two. These include a mattress manufacturing plant, a shoe factory, an underwear factory, a clothing factory and a paper bag company. It is true that they do not employ large numbers of people, as compared with the big factories up here on the mainland, but every person who loses his employment makes the situation that much more serious. At the present time some five thousand workmen are in receipt of a kind of dole. It is supposed to be work, but actually it is a dole. They work a forty-eight hour week for \$13.20, the theory being that they are to work for two months and then qualify for unemployment insurance. I do not know how that will work out, and I should like to ascertain whether that will be possible. These men work one day and give the next day's work for nothing; they do not get paid for the second day. I do not believe they will be able to work long enough to qualify for unemployment insurance. Just imagine, in this great country of ours, people getting \$13.20 for a whole week's work. The only thing that can happen, the obvious thing, is that the family allowance cheques will be used for purposes not intended by the act. There is no question at all about it; it has to be that way.

Another matter I am afraid I will have to raise in this house is one I mentioned some time ago when I asked the Prime Minister what action was being taken with regard to the increasing unemployment in Newfoundland. At that time the right hon. gentleman replied that federal works were going to be expedited. Well, as far as I am concerned there is no question about the works being expedited, but this unemployment does not exist in only one part of my province; it is all over the country. The major centres such as Corner Brook and Grand Falls would not be as severely affected. I noticed this week that the plant at Grand Falls is going on a five-day shift, while the sulphite mill at

[Mr. Higgins.]

Corner Brook is getting ready to close; but those centres are not so badly affected as the capital city and the settlements around the coast. The public works that are to be undertaken and some of which are actually under way in order to combat unemployment have been allocated by districts, and the district of Burin-Burgeo is to receive \$109,735.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, when my estimates are before the committee the hon. gentleman will have ample opportunity to speak about public works. Now we are discussing the labour estimates; and I would not be ready at this time to answer questions because my officials are not here.

Mr. Higgins: I am not going to ask any questions. I have the answers in a return I received the other day.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): But these matters should be brought up on my estimates, when I will have all the answers to any questions which may be asked. I do not think it is in order to discuss my estimates on the labour estimates.

Mr. Higgins: I am discussing unemployment, and surely it is proper to draw attention to what is happening down there and the need for such works in a particular district. Is there any objection?

The Chairman: The hon. member must discuss the estimates of the Department of Labour.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): There certainly is an objection to a discussion of my estimates at this time.

Mr. Higgins: Then without asking any questions I shall simply point out that of an expenditure of \$359,000, only \$11,000 has been allocated to the constituency of St. John's East.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): Probably that is because it has less unemployment.

Mr. Higgins: That is not where there is less unemployment. The two constituencies of St. John's West and East are to get \$40,000 between them, and those are the two districts which did not elect Liberal candidates. That is why so little money has been allotted to them; I cannot see any other reason. We do have unemployment there, and I am drawing this to the attention of the Minister of Labour to see if something cannot be done to take care of that unemployment. I am not asking for answers from the Minister of Public Works, but I do advocate most