

who were sightless upon the state for assistance. The hon. gentleman will recall the representations made in this house every year from 1926 to 1933 on behalf of the sightless in Canada. This item does not afford an opportunity to express anything more than I have already said as to the attitude of the government towards the matter. Some of the provinces have enacted legislation under which they have agreed to undertake their portion of the expenditure incident to the placing of the blind in a position where pensions would be payable to them on the basis of the old age pension provision but beginning at the age of forty. No uniform action as yet has been taken, but I feel that if we make any speedy recovery the time is not far distant when some provision of that sort will be made on behalf of the sightless.

Mr. STANLEY: I believe the Canadian National Institute for the Blind carries on some small industry of its own for the manufacture of various commodities. I have specifically in mind the manufacture of rubber mats, and things of the kind. If the different departments of the government could be urged to give special consideration to this organization in the purchase of such supplies it would be a practical way of assisting the individual blind people through their organization.

Mr. BENNETT: My memory is that an order in council was passed extending some relief to the blind in connection with some of the provisions of our revenue act. Exactly what the terms of the order in council were I do not recall at the moment.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): There was some provision in regard to blind soldiers.

Mr. BENNETT: I think we passed something with respect to the sales tax, as my hon. friend the Minister of Finance suggests. I believe I express the view of every member of this committee when I say that anything that reasonably can be done in an administrative sense on behalf of the blind would be done gladly by any government regardless of its political complexion. But I may just point out that a difficulty arose in one case; this created a form of competition which proved destructive to those with whom it came in contact, and that expresses the other side of the question.

Item agreed to.

Amount required to provide for grants to be made to the provinces of—

Nova Scotia, \$875,000.

New Brunswick, \$600,000.

Prince Edward Island, \$125,000, pending consideration of provincial subsidies.

Mr. MacLEAN: I should like to ask the Prime Minister if any arrangement was agreed upon by the provincial premiers who met here some time ago with regard to increasing the subsidies. This is a provisional subsidy made under the terms of the Duncan report, and this question has been outstanding for some time. I may say that it is a live topic in the maritimes, and especially in Prince Edward Island. We have no way of raising revenue except by direct taxation. We have no mines on which we can collect royalties; we have no timber permits as they have in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Some of our friends think we are simply living on provincial subsidies, but that is not correct. Our taxes are increasing every year, as they are in the other provinces, and our people are waiting and watching, hoping that some day the subsidy question will be gone into and a larger amount agreed upon. I do not wish to refer to any preelection promises; I know the Prime Minister did not make them personally, but I have before me a pamphlet which was published in the newspapers, in which it is stated that if this government came into power the subsidy would be increased by \$700,000 annually. This is the paragraph:

Bennett will fully implement the Duncan award, thereby enriching our province by some \$700,000 annually.

I do not hold the Prime Minister responsible for that promise, but someone made it and a certain number of our electors believed it. However, I do hope the time is not far distant when this question, which is engaging the attention of the people of the maritimes, will be thoroughly gone into and satisfactorily settled.

Mr. BENNETT: At all events it does not appear that a sufficient number of people believed that promise to prevent my hon. friend from being elected. I have not heard that figure before. During the recent visit to Ottawa of the premiers of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island they suggested that a commission be appointed for the purpose of dealing with what were alleged to be the unfulfilled recommendations of the Duncan report, and the government concluded that the proper course to follow was to hear representatives of each of the provinces before a committee of the whole cabinet. We have advised the premiers of the three several prov-