

ing out agreements we should profit by that experience and see that, as far as possible, relief works shall tend at the same time to reduce the tax burden of relief.

Mr. STEWART: I think the minister has made it clear that he appreciates the difficulty, and let me tell him from experience that it is very real. The minister speaks about works. Assume that a contract is given for the construction of a section of the highway, and you seek to impose upon that contractor the fulfilment of the provisions of this section. It is simply unworkable in a case where you have given a man a contract as the result of an advertisement or calling for tenders. He puts in the lowest tender, and then you come along and seek to impose these terms upon him. Perhaps it might be done if the work is carried on through some agency, by a municipality or a province, but if the work is in the hands of a contractor I think you will find great difficulty in carrying out the provisions of this section.

Mr. ROGERS: I agree that it would require very careful inspection, and also that we are not entitled to expect contractors to retain men who are incompetent, simply because they have been on relief. I agree with all that, but I am also convinced that we can make some progress in that direction. At least we must seek to do so.

Mr. BENNETT: My observation in one particular locality has been that by confining your activities to the appointment of men on relief you place on relief those who would like to work and who are deprived of the opportunity of doing so. For instance, a large number of men would like to work on a highway, and they have reached the point where if they do not get work they will have to go on relief. If you confine your activities to those on relief, I repeat, those not now on relief will be compelled to go on relief. That I know to be the case in one locality in particular to which my attention has been directed. That is one point which I think the minister should keep in mind.

The second point I desire to make is purely a technical one, and I offer these suggestions—despite the fact that it is not regarded as a desirable profession—because at one time I did practise my profession of law. The Minister of Finance had something to say about that the other evening. I now desire to point out, however, that the word “dominion” has no place at all, as far as I can see, in the Interpretation Act. I felt that I might be in error, so I sent for the Interpretation Act.

[Mr. Rogers.]

The statute now before us is predicated upon the use of the word “dominion” and our Interpretation Act uses the word “Canada” instead of “dominion.” I can only point out to the minister that, while I take it that he is not responsible for the drafting of this bill, nevertheless we see that word “dominion” frequently used. I observe that the word is used in the preamble itself:

Whereas it is in the national interest that the dominion should cooperate ...

Under the Interpretation Act there is nothing to indicate that the word “dominion” means the Dominion of Canada. I mention that because it does seem to me that there must be a rearrangement of some of these sections. For instance, in section 3 the words “the general interests of Canada” make correct use of the word, but to use the words “the general interests of the dominion” would not be correct, as far as I can see at present.

Mr. POWER: May I suggest, since there is some question as to the drafting of this section, that perhaps we had better allow it to stand, because there are two or three places where I think the phraseology might be changed with great benefit.

Section stands.

On section 4—Agreements with provinces.

Mr. BENNETT: I believe there is an amendment to be proposed to this section.

Mr. GARDINER: I move that subsection 1 of section 4 of the bill be amended by striking out all the words after the word “may” in line 17 of page 2, to the end of the sentence in line 21, and substituting therefor the following words:

... by way of loan or advance out of the consolidated revenue fund, or by way of guarantee, grant financial assistance to any province to enable the province to provide for any expenditures for direct relief or for relief measures, up to an amount not exceeding in the aggregate the total amount which may be otherwise payable to such province under any agreement entered into under the authority of this act.

Mr. BENNETT: It will be observed at once, Mr. Chairman, that the effect of this amendment is to ask parliament to grant a blank cheque to deal with these problems, except that the amount of the blank cheque is limited but not rigidly fixed. When I recall what I listened to during four years from the now leader of the government and his allies regarding blank cheques, I find it a little difficult to understand how section 4 could ever find a place in a bill submitted to parliament by the Liberal party. I cannot