

*Unemployment*

ing employment without at the same time giving direct financial assistance to industry. That would be, I am quite sure, the desire of my hon. friend. It is conceivable, however, that some form of financial assistance might be desirable and that, as a result of that assistance, we might provide further opportunities for employment. I think each proposal of that kind must be examined on its own merits, and in advance of an examination of the situation I cannot tell my hon. friend definitely whether or not the government will give assistance or financial aid to any particular industrial corporation. I simply point out to him that the power is here in case it should seem wise to utilize it, after an examination of the situation.

Mr. STEVENS: Might I draw the attention of the minister to three words in this subsection which, I think, require some explanation. In the first part of subsection 1 of section 4 the governor in council is authorized to enter into agreements with the provinces. Then in the last four lines we have the power regarding agreements with corporations and so on, which reads:

The governor in council may, subject as aforesaid, also enter into agreements with corporations—

I assume that the words "subject as aforesaid" mean subject to the agreements made with the provinces.

Mr. ROGERS: If my hon. friend will permit me, I would say subject to the limitation involved by way of the appropriations made by parliament for relief purposes.

Mr. STEVENS: Not being a lawyer, I always hesitate to express a view on draftsmanship, because one is always open to rebuke for treading upon sacred ground, but might I express the opinion that these words might be interpreted as meaning subject to agreements having been entered into with the provinces, or in other words tying the hands of the federal government, in the assistance given by way of agreements with corporations, partnerships and so on, to whatever the provinces may have decided beforehand, in agreement with the federal government. Is there any necessity, or what is the necessity, for limiting the matter in that way? It may be said that my interpretation of this wording is wrong, but after these bills become statutes we are always told that they must be interpreted according to their wording, and I invite the minister to give consideration to that point. I may be entirely wrong, but it appears to me that if this bill passes as it is drafted, containing the words "the governor in council may, subject as aforesaid," which words, I

[Mr. Rogers.]

submit, apply to the words, "also enter into agreements with corporations, partnerships or individuals engaged in industry respecting the expansion of industrial employment," it will work out in this way: The unemployment relief commission—I think that is the name of it—may find that it is desirable to do something along the line mentioned by the hon. member for Davenport a few moments ago. In fact that is already evidenced, because we are assisting the railways in this direction at the present time. I think that is a very good move, which probably will result in a substantial increase in employment. I think it will be recalled that the previous government entered into agreements with steel companies at Sault Ste. Marie and in Nova Scotia, and I believe also with the car construction companies; I am not quite certain, but I think I am right in that. These were all commendable efforts towards stimulating normal employment in industry; apparently these efforts have been more or less successful, and it may well be that other lines of activity may be entered into along that line.

The hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard has pointed out also that the word "corporation" might be interpreted to mean a municipal corporation. Of course I do not think that is intended here, but in my opinion there is no reason why the paragraph should not be enlarged to include municipalities. The only objection is that rather narrow adherence to the strictly constitutional line of dealing only with provinces. I know there is a strong school of thought which believes that we should deal only with the provinces. With the experience we have gained over a number of years I am not quite certain that we should limit ourselves in that way, but that is a matter of opinion and I respect the opinions of others holding that view though I am inclined to think that the dominion government could well afford to break away from that procedure, at least in the large cities and centres where unemployment is becoming or has become extremely acute and where the problem has attained a magnitude which is not the case in the ordinary municipality. So I think the federal government might well reserve to itself the right to enter into agreements with cities. However we shall leave that out of the question for the moment and limit ourselves to industrial corporations or public utilities. There may be certain public utilities with which agreements could be made, something in the nature of hydro electric development in new areas, for instance. I can visualize that. I really believe that in the mining areas of northern Ontario and Quebec, which are developing so rapidly and