

Mr. HEENAN: Probably I did not express myself properly. The minister knows there is on the statute books at present a law under which the federal government offers to pay fifty per cent of the old age pension cost in connection with that paid by any province that will come in on the scheme.

Mr. BENNETT: Seventy-five per cent.

Mr. HEENAN: The original legislation was fifty per cent, and five provinces came in under that scheme. The present government increased the federal contribution to seventy-five per cent. My understanding is that even under the seventy-five per cent contribution no more provinces have taken part in the scheme, and inasmuch as the federal government promised to take it over on a national basis and pay one hundred per cent, I understand New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have passed measures accepting the old age pension scheme but have not so far proclaimed their acts, waiting for this government to take it over one hundred per cent. That was what I meant when I asked whether the government could give the committee any information as to when they proposed to pay the one hundred per cent, so that all the provinces could participate.

Mr. GORDON: The question to which the hon. member refers has been the subject of debate and comment for some years. It is quite true that the former government established the law on the basis of a contribution of fifty per cent towards old age pensions, and last year the act was amended so as to provide for a seventy-five per cent contribution. How this matter appeals to the provinces is a question pretty well for them to determine. The statute is very clear and plain. The subject is a large one and will command the attention of those who have to do with matters affecting old age pensions. That is the position as it stands at present.

Mr. HEENAN: I am not now going to argue that point further. I am wondering whether the government could tell us whether they have dropped the idea of establishing a national council for the civil service of Canada. It will be recalled that a committee of this house recommended the establishment of such a council, and in conformity with that recommendation, the government of the day passed an order in council providing for a drafting committee to draft a constitution. The order in council can be found on the file. Since that time I have not heard whether the present government intends to proceed with the matter or to drop it entirely.

Mr. BENNETT: The matter stands just where it was left by the hon. gentleman. He passed his order in council and stopped. The stop still stands.

Mr. MITCHELL: Is it the intention of the government to appoint any official advisers representing labour in connection with the forthcoming Imperial economic conference? I understand the British government are going about the business of this conference in their careful and practical way by appointing four official labour advisers from names submitted to them by the British Trades Union Congress. I understand that questions, such as migration, which vitally affect labour, may be discussed at the conference, and I should like to know the attitude of the government in that regard. I understand Australia and South Africa have taken the same step.

Mr. BENNETT: In Great Britain, prior to the formation of a national government, a Labour government was in office. A number of members of that Labour government are members of the national government, and in the formation of committees regard was had to that fact. This government will call to its assistance those capable of rendering such help on every subject on which it may require to be aided. That will include labour if labour questions are being discussed, and similarly for any other questions affecting the state. Furthermore, the committees that are dealing with the economic conference were advised that the British government intends to ask representatives of labour organizations to come in the capacity of advisers, and I believe they are coming as such. If advisers are necessary, they are always available from the ranks of labour as well as from other quarters.

Mr. MITCHELL: The question was raised by a previous speaker of the payment out of the federal treasury of the full one hundred per cent of old age pension benefits. The hon. member stated that Nova Scotia and New Brunswick had not passed measures to bring their respective provinces within the sphere of this legislation. Should, however, the federal government implement the promise it made at the last election, that would hardly be necessary, because no cost would be entailed by the provincial governments.

In connection with the eight-hour day, labour has for many years petitioned the various governments requesting that they ratify the convention of the International Labour Office ratified at Washington in 1919.