

wanted to find out how they were going to vote, and they told us pretty generally throughout the northern part of the country that if they voted for us they would lose their jobs on the highway.

To give the house some idea of what was going on, I wish to read a letter in connection with the old age pensions. I do not think any persons in my district received an old age pension without being distinctly led to understand that they would lose the pension if they voted the wrong way. The widows' and orphans' fund was interfered with. I do not believe such statements were true, yet the influence came, as it were, from Toronto; that idea seemed to permeate the riding, and it was very hard to offset it. Hon. gentlemen know the share that the Dominion government contributes to the cost of old age pensions. Let me read this letter, a copy of which I hold in my hand:

Mr. *John Edgar Simpson*      Aurora, Oct. 8, 1929.

Dear,

I understand that you are an applicant for the old age pension being provided for by the present government under Hon. G. Howard Ferguson and I am glad to see that your application has gone in. I fully realize that many of the old men and women of North York who have not been able to save much of this world's goods are going to receive, from this government, a just reward for their many years of service and toil in the province which has made the province the place it is for the younger people to live in.

Plans have been definitely made by the government and are now working satisfactorily so that if the present government is kept in power the first check would come to you sometime in November. If however, the Liberal party should get in power it will be delayed somewhat owing to the difference in the plans of Mr. Sinclair, Liberal leader.

As you are aware I am the Conservative candidate in North York and if I am elected to parliament I shall consider it one of my foremost duties to see that every eligible man or woman, who are applicants for this old age pension shall receive favorable consideration. This I shall consider one of my first duties as a member of parliament and being a member in sympathy with the government, I am sure that you will agree that I will be in a better position to do this than a Liberal candidate.

I am anxious to see that every man and woman will receive their first check as soon as possible. It will be as much pleasure to me as it will be to you.

In closing may I ask you to use your influence with those of your family. Thanking you and with kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Yours sincerely,

Clifford Case.

We have other letters of a similar type. We feel that there should be absolutely no interference with these old age pensioners. It is well known that the Dominion government contributes a greater proportion of the

[Mr. Blair.]

cost of the scheme than the provincial governments, and there should be no interference by the provincial governments. We would not be any too confident that four or five million dollars passing into the hands of G. Howard Ferguson would be dealt with fairly from the political standpoint. Old age pensions should be held absolutely sacred; people who are tottering on the verge of the grave should not in a matter of this kind be dealt with in a threatening fashion. We feel, however, that that has been done in our district throughout the campaign. I do not hold my opponent responsible for it. I do not think he approved it, I think he was honourable, and I never accused him of it, but when I traced it back I found that a great deal of this disgraceful work was coming apparently from Toronto. If any portion of this grant is to go to people of that type I would be inclined to view their administration of the money with a good deal of suspicion.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I should like to make a suggestion to my hon. friend. I believe we are all anxious to dispose of this resolution to-night. A good many members have been hoping that my hon. friend would reply to the questions that have been asked. As it is getting toward eleven o'clock, I would suggest that if he can see his way to answer the questions which have been put to him it would facilitate the passing of the resolution.

Mr. BENNETT: I avail myself, Mr. Chairman, of the courtesy of the leader of the opposition, because I had hoped that my hon. friends opposite had about exhausted themselves and I was waiting until they had done so.

An hon. MEMBER: No, we are just started.

Mr. BENNETT: That well may be, but may I point out that unless this house believes there is not an urgent necessity for the appropriation of moneys for relief, then the hon. gentlemen are right in the course they are taking; but if, on the other hand, a condition exists which is of national importance with respect to unemployment and the suffering entailed thereby, this house should act, and act promptly. I merely make that observation for this reason, that I have listened with very great care to the addresses this evening, and I am within the sense of this house when I say that most of the time has been taken up in discussing matters that relate to the administration of affairs in Ontario by a provincial government elected on a provincial franchise, and which government, I take it, represents the sense of the people of that great province