

country of the various measures intended to relieve unemployment and provide employment.

That is why we have come here with this measure. The power of the commission, as I say, will expire with the appropriation voted by parliament. The government hopes that this commission will not have to continue for very long. I am afraid, however, that now we are getting a truer perspective of the extent of unemployment and of what have been the consequences of the manner in which the whole question has been dealt with by municipalities, provinces and the dominion, all three together, in the last four or five years, it may be that we shall see that this problem is not going to be solved as soon as a good many had hoped it might. At any rate one thing which will help bring about a solution, sooner than otherwise would be the case is a procedure whereby the country will be fully informed as to all phases of the question, through parliament being permitted the fullest discussion of every measure intended to deal with it.

The next point mentioned by my hon. friend was the danger he saw under this legislation, of projects being started and, of necessity, being continued from year to year. My hon. friend evidently thinks the commission may embark upon projects likely to extend over a considerable period of time so that parliament in future sessions will be committed to large expenditures which it cannot control. I am sorry to have to inform the house that such is exactly what the present administration has had to face in considering what measures it would be most advisable to submit to parliament at this session in dealing with this question. The other evening I spoke of some \$50,000,000 which might be involved in the various projects for relief and employment. I was thinking, at that time, of the program which the present administration had in mind respecting measures the government itself would initiate, measures which would be related to its own policies, some of which would be a continuation of policies of the previous administration. But when I made that statement I did not take into account an expenditure of something like another \$25,000,000, to which the country is already committed, through projects started by the previous administration either last year or in previous years. These if not continued and brought to completion will now have to be abandoned altogether with consequent loss of all outlays already made upon them.

I venture to say that if instead of taking a free hand, under orders in council, to enter

upon all kinds of projects, whether they were committing the country to one, two, three or four years of expenditure, the previous government had obliged itself or been obliged to come to parliament, as we are coming, to explain each project, the country would not have found itself in such a difficult position as it is in at present.

May I give an example: some of the projects partially completed have to do with great buildings for police and military purposes. The expenditures for the erection of barracks, and the like run into hundreds of thousands, yes, into millions of dollars. Those projects are partially under way. The policy of this government is to consider many other matters as being more important than that of increasing the number of military and police buildings in Canada. Either we have now to leave those projects where they are, one-half or one-third completed as the case may be, or ask parliament for additional appropriations in order to bring about their completion. That is the situation, even though we may feel that the equivalent amount of money could be spent more profitably in giving employment along lines which would provide the nation with social assets of much greater importance than those of the class I have mentioned. I hope that one of the effects of restoring to parliament a proper control over expenditures for relief, for providing employment and for other purposes, will be that each particular project may be carefully scrutinized, and if it does not commend itself to the wisdom of the house it may then be withdrawn. At any rate before we are hereafter committed to expenditure in the name of relief which in reality are expenditures for military and police purposes, there will be an opportunity for parliament to have something to say. Parliament at least will have a chance to have its word. I point this out as another aspect of the legislation before us which differentiates it from what we have had in the past.

May I put the matter to the house in another way, so that not only the hon. member who has just spoken but all hon. members who did not hear what was said at an earlier stage with respect to measures which are related may have as complete a picture as possible before them. Perhaps I could not better disclose the purposes behind the introduction of the measure, setting up a national employment commission, than to reverse the order in which the bills are being introduced in the house. Assume that instead of introducing it as the third measure relating to the provision of employment and the relief of unemployment, the special supply bill to which I made reference the other evening and