

Unemployment Relief

possible, that is always so. However, as a great judge once said in a case which I am sure he will remember, you must construe these matters as a reasonable man. We are dealing with an immediate situation which touches all provinces and we propose to endeavour to discharge our duty in that regard as reasonable public servants and trustees.

Mr. BOURASSA: There is one point regarding highways which I did not quite catch, as to the stretches of road which are to be built, especially between Ontario and Manitoba and in British Columbia. Once the work is done under appropriation of part of this fund, such portions will remain under provincial jurisdiction and maintenance just the same as the portions of the road with which they are connected?

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) is quite right; the property in the road will be the property of the crown in the right of the province, it will be the king's highway within the province and will so remain. My judgment is that this parliament having the right to raise revenue by any form or process of taxation could in this case make some contribution to the maintenance of these roads. I have expressed publicly and I still think that that should be so because the traffic is interprovincial and international and to that extent benefits not only the province but the Dominion, especially as it may reduce an adverse balance of trade.

Mr. EULER: Would that apply only to those portions where we assisted in the construction?

Mr. BOURASSA: That principle should apply not only to the new stretches of road which are to be built but to the highway generally. Assistance should be given to the provincial governments in the maintenance of that so-called national highway which would be the principal highway from one end of the country to the other.

Mr. BENNETT: As perhaps the hon. member for Labelle will recall, that is my view, and has been for many years, and I apply that principle not only to highways but to technical education and to agriculture. As I said during the campaign, last year we collected over \$20,000,000 from tobacco and cigarettes through the exercise of the powers of taxation which we have.

Mr. EULER: It was considerably more than that.

[Mr. Bennett.]

Mr. BENNETT: It will be more than that this year. I mention that as indicating one reason why I think that in the event of the contingency to which I allude becoming an actual fact, then the contribution to maintenance of the road should be general from Cape Breton to Vancouver.

Mr. BOURASSA: There is a very interesting point in connection with railways which has not been dealt with. In what manner does the government propose to make use of any part of this fund as applied to railways? I am not speaking of railway crossings or things of that nature, but does the government intend to contribute either by way of subsidies or assistance in the issuing of bonds to the building of branch lines which would give work to unemployed people in the particular region and at the same time encourage the taking up of lands by people who are not now occupied?

Mr. BENNETT: Immediately upon assuming office I asked both the great railway systems as to their probable program of extension of branch lines. While the matter has not been in any sense definitely settled, if any work is carried on between the present date and February at a cost which would be estimated at 10 per cent more than the cost of the work at a future time, this vote might be available to assist in defraying the extra cost, but it would not be considered as a subsidy because that would be a matter which this parliament should itself authorize. It would be taking care of the enhanced cost by reason of anticipating to-day work which would in the ordinary course of events be done the day after to-morrow; doing work to-day at an added cost instead of doing it in the summer and spring. That is all that is contemplated at the present moment. The railways have partly completed a report but it is not yet available.

Mr. BOURASSA: Will it be possible to have it during this session?

Mr. BENNETT: I am afraid it will not be available. I wanted to have it as comprehensive as possible, having regard to the location of the unemployed. As I understand it, the matter is being looked into carefully by those who have to do with it but I have been told that it will not be available for some little time. I did not consider it to be a matter of great concern especially in view of the fact that the harvest has absorbed a certain number of unemployed. They are