

*Unemployment Continuance Act*

the attention of the house to the fact that the municipality of Burnaby could not get any money from the provincial government, although over \$1,800,000 had been sent to them by the federal government.

Mr. BENNETT: I suppose the hon. gentleman realizes that we have no contract with the municipalities. We have stated that so frequently that I thought it was well understood. Neither the municipality of Burnaby nor any other municipality had any relations with a federal government. Our contract was with the province. As between the province and the municipality, we were neither a court of justice nor an arbitrator.

Mr. REID: I can assure the Prime Minister that I think I have done a little service to the municipalities of British Columbia by bringing the matter to his attention. I hope the bill will pass. But the Minister of Finance was sent a telegram the other day by the government of British Columbia, as I have stated, and he said that there was no reason on earth why the province could not have paid the municipality's account. That is why I object to the Prime Minister saying I have stopped payment. Here is a telegram that I received to-day:

Deputy Minister of Finance, Victoria, says the dominion's share of the money spent is not in his hands.

That is what the Burnaby Board of Trade was told only the other day. I should like to ask the Minister of Finance if that is not correct, that on his own word to me he sent a telegram to the government of British Columbia saying there was no reason on earth why the money could not be paid. Yet we are being told we are stopping these payments, and still the province will not pay the municipalities.

I am glad to see the Minister of Railways (Mr. Manion) in his seat. I was disappointed that information was not given me regarding the Canadian National contract for railway ties. When the government passed the order in council for two million ties at a price not to exceed sixty-five cents each, it made some of us wonder, because certain of our contractors in British Columbia were told last fall that the Canadian National had ties on hand for two and a half or three years ahead. I should like the Minister of Railways to pay some attention to this.

Mr. POULIOT: May I give my hon. friend the information? One of the contractors is a strong Conservative.

Mr. REID: I received this letter the other day and I think some attention should be

[Mr. Reid.]

paid to it, because it would be interesting to know just what price was paid by the Canadian National Railways for the ties. This letter is not from one of my constituents, but from a man in Edmonton whom I do not know. I give that information in case it may be thought I prompted the writer. This is the letter:

March 16, 1932.

Dear Sir,—

Apologizing for the question raised by yourself in the house reference the purchasing of railway ties by the Canadian National Railways, I offer the following information concerning the workmen on the job.

I am not vouching for the authenticity of this information, but I think the statement is worth looking into. The writer continues:

Sixteen farmers, originally, cut ties for Canadian National Railways in the bush near Edson, Alberta. Each was to receive 8 cents per regulation tie. Each man paid one dollar daily for board. Towards the close most men broke even; two quit as they were getting in debt. One fellow cut 400 ties, an average of eighteen plus, daily. He ended up, after paying for axe handles, with \$2.95 to his credit. From the men's viewpoint they would be better off in a city taking the dole. There must be many Canadian taxpayers like myself in British Columbia and Alberta who would feel that an answer to a straight question would be in the public interest. No wonder that there are 6,140 single unemployed on the relief list in Edmonton alone.

That is signed by A. C. Russell, who gives his address as 10555-93 street, Edmonton, Alberta. I hope the Minister of Railways will look into this, because if it is a fact that only eight cents was paid I think the writer is about correct when he says men would be better off taking the dole, for such remuneration is equivalent to slavery—and this government should be no party to slavery. I hope the Minister of Railways will obtain information from the Canadian National management as to who got the contract and what price was paid.

Mr. MANION: Mr. Chairman, I am glad my hon. friend has brought up the question of ties, because some rather wild statements have been made with respect to it, one of the wildest by the leader of the opposition (Mr. Mackenzie King).

Mr. REID: Not by me.

Mr. MANION: I am not speaking of the hon. gentleman. One of the wildest of those statements was made by the leader of the opposition. I was not in the house at the time, but I was startled to read this heading in the Montreal Gazette of March 18:

Grave charge made by head of opposition.  
Mackenzie King refers to railway tie deal.  
No tenders called.