

from Dakota to serve a community only a little further west than the community referred to in this communication. On one occasion I brought the matter to the attention of the Liberal government and action was taken in less than two weeks. I had occasion to bring the matter to the attention of the present government and it took them about six months, when finally the request of the people to be allowed to import hay and straw free of duty was granted.

Now this is a serious matter to these people. I think the government has already received a resolution that was passed in the Manitoba legislature dealing with the same matter, and I may add that when it was being considered last fall the Manitoba government undertook to see that the privilege, if granted, would not be abused; that is to say, they undertook to see that no person should be allowed to make it a commercial transaction but that the people would supply only their own needs.

I again ask the minister in charge of this relief measure this question: What better way has the government in view to meet the situation than by creating a sectional tariff, according to the statement of the Minister of National Revenue? I call this to the hon. gentleman's attention now. I would have deferred making further reference to it, and giving the Minister of National Revenue a chance possibly to reply to my last communication. However, having waited some days, and no reply having been received, I deem it necessary, since the bill is about to get its third reading, to bring the matter once more to the attention of the government.

Mr. THOMAS REID (New Westminster): I have one suggestion to offer to the Minister of Labour. When the bill was being discussed in the house he intimated that it was the intention of the government to try to provide useful work for the thousands of single unemployed men in the camps in British Columbia. In that connection I have a suggestion which I think has merit. As the hon. gentleman well knows, our forests are being gradually depleted. In New Westminster we have a plant which is used for the extraction of seeds from coniferous trees such as spruce, firs and balsam. These seeds are shipped to practically every country in the world but we in Canada are not using any of them. We have also dominion national parks as well as the provincial parks, and I would suggest to the minister that when he is looking around for useful work for the thousands of single homeless men who have been fed and looked after during the past winter, the question of reforestation be given

[Mr. Brown.]

serious consideration. I do not think we should wait until all our forests are depleted. Why should Canada provide seed for every other country while we in this country do not take care of our own forests, looking to the future? I offer this suggestion to the minister in all seriousness. I submit that it is meritorious and should be carried out, in view of the fact that we have seed and we have land which originally grew forests and which is ready for another crop.

Mr. ANGUS MacINNIS (Vancouver South): Much as I should like to assist the government and give them a free hand in dealing with the problem of unemployment, I shall be compelled to vote against the bill in its present form. I had long an opinion that as far as giving relief to the unemployed was concerned, the reason the government wanted this power was not in order that they might have a free hand to give as much relief as possible to the unemployed but to give as little as possible. I am strengthened in that feeling by a statement made by the Prime Minister last year, when he said that having the bill in this form, without a definite figure for any particular need, the government had saved millions of the taxpayers' money. I am further strengthened in the conviction by the fact that this year the government have fixed a limit to the relief to be granted to the unemployed, notwithstanding that they have reserved the right for every other purpose, to spend as much as they wish.

Unemployment is increasing rapidly in this dominion. I am in constant touch with the unemployment situation in the city of Vancouver, from which I come, and the unemployed families on relief there now total almost ten thousand. The cost of relief in that city for the first two weeks of March, up to March 15, was \$96,000 as compared with \$74,000 last year, or an increase of \$22,000. If we take the official weighted index of employment for the month of February and compare that with the weighted figure in the month of June, 1931, when the census was taken and when we got the most reliable figures with regard to unemployment conditions which we have yet had placed before us, we find that in June, 1931, the weighted number was 103.6, and the number of people in employment was 2,172,000. In February of this year the weighted index number was 76.8, a decline of 26.8. On the same basis the number of employed in February would