

*Unemployment Relief*

same butter thirty-five and forty cents a pound; that is, eleven to sixteen cents more than the price prevailing about twenty miles from Montreal. Surely there is something in this which is entirely wrong, and should, and could be corrected. I hope that in the application of this measure of relief the government will not be seduced by the idea of making only a big display—building long stretches of road which will be very costly, which will give work only to a few people, which will complicate, as I have demonstrated, our problem of transportation generally, which will not improve the financial situation of our great railway concerns, and which at the same time will be entirely against that timely suggestion of the Employment Service Council that we should employ people as near as possible to their place of abode, which as everybody knows, apart altogether from sentiment, from the purely economic point of view, represents a great saving on the part of labour and on the part of the government. Suppose to relieve unemployment in the city of Toronto the government helps to take three or four thousand unemployed there and transfers them to the boundary district between Ontario and Manitoba to build a road; the work of those men will cost the provincial and the federal governments ten times as much as if they were employed at home.

Let the government stick as closely as they can to that suggestion: employ people in their natural sphere, where they can be in touch with their families—give work to the father in order that he may nourish his wife and family. Let them see that this money is well employed in small things in which neither politicians, contractors nor anybody else will be interested in making a display. The Prime Minister is right, and in that I am prepared to uphold him. This is not a situation to be met by legal quibbles. At the same time he knows human nature well enough, his own nature and mine and that of his friends, to realize that the portion of this money which will be used in large expenditures will result in a greater percentage of loss than that portion of it which will be used properly and modestly in every corner of the land according to the real needs of the poor people who are waiting for it and who have nobody to speak for them. Like the member for Muskoka-Ontario, I raise my voice in favour of the unknown. Much has been said about the unknown dead soldier. Well, I raise my voice in the name of the unknown men, women and children who have nobody to represent them, who have nobody

[Mr. Bourassa.]

to talk for them in the name of this or that party, or this or that company, while actually waiting for relief from parliament. If the government are prepared to do that, for my part I am prepared to give them ample opportunity to do it, deferring until next session an inquiry as to whether they have fulfilled their duty as the people of Canada expect them to do.

Mr. HEENAN: I confess, Mr. Chairman, that I cannot follow my hon. friend from Muskoka-Ontario when he takes the position that an unorganized territory is entitled to more consideration from this parliament than one that is organized. For my part I want to assist the Prime Minister and the government in getting through this vote; I only want to see that the money is expended in a proper way and under fair conditions. Yesterday afternoon I put a question to the Prime Minister with respect to fair wages and conditions of employment. I want to point out to him now that the bill we passed last session does not provide for fair wages on works aided by federal grants; but the resolution that was passed in 1900, providing for fair wages and conditions of employment on public works, contains this paragraph:

It is hereby declared that the work to which the foregoing policy shall apply includes not only work undertaken by the government itself, but also all works aided by grant of Dominion public funds.

I would ask the Prime Minister when this bill is being prepared to see to it that provision be incorporated to ensure that those who secure the grants shall pay fair wages and give proper conditions of employment.

Mr. BENNETT: So far as our own expenditures are concerned, Mr. Chairman, they will be governed by the statute and regulations. So far as the provinces are concerned, we have no control over their expenditures.

Mr. HEENAN: I do not think the Prime Minister was listening to me.

Mr. BENNETT: I heard the paragraph.

Mr. HEENAN: The resolution passed by this parliament in 1900 provides:

That it be resolved, that all government contracts should contain such conditions as will prevent abuses, which may arise from the subletting of such contracts, and that every effort should be made to secure the payment of such wages as are generally accepted as current in each trade for competent workmen in the district where the work is carried out, and that this house cordially concurs in such policy, and deems it the duty of the government to take immediate steps to give effect thereto.

It is hereby declared that the work to which the foregoing policy shall apply includes not