

dealing with this great problem of unemployment. It should have afforded the basis for a truly national people's movement which would have linked up the activities of individuals or organizations, municipalities and provinces in one great national endeavour to provide work and sustenance for all. After all, unemployment is the greatest problem before the people of Canada at the present time. The ministry to-day is simply washing its hands of any direct obligation in the matter apart from contributing money out of the federal public treasury for other public bodies to spend. That has been the mistake from the beginning. The government at the outset should have had its own policy and, in so far as federal moneys were being spent, they should have been spent under the direction of a commission which would have accounted for every cent to the ministry, and through the ministry, to parliament.

I intended, when speaking about the extent of controlling expenditures, to observe that an anomalous feature of this act is that the only limit that is stipulated anywhere with regard to any amount is that which is fixed in one of the clauses of the bill as to what is to be paid out in direct relief. What irony there is in the fact that in a relief measure which covers expenditures for almost everything the only thing limited in amount is the money that is to be spent in actual direct relief. As regards everything else—and the ministry is practically free to use a blank cheque for any purpose—there is no limit whatever.

Another objection that comes to my mind is this. While this measure purports to be an act to aid in the relief of unemployment, it is in reality for two other purposes as well, purposes that are anything but justified in the light of existing circumstances. One of these purposes is to enable the ministry to carry out some of its policies in other directions, policies which are apart altogether from relief. For example, the ministry has a certain policy under the Canada-United Kingdom trade agreement. We were told that agreement would promote trade between the United Kingdom and ourselves. As a matter of fact, that agreement has not promoted trade to the extent which the ministry expected or hoped it would. What are they now preparing to do? They are going to use part of these unemployment moneys to subsidize the export of commodities from Canada to Great Britain; when the Minister of Finance comes down with his financial statement a year hence we will not be told that the cost of subsidizing this export trade is part of the ordinary expenditures of Canada, expenditures chargeable to the promotion of

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

trade; we will be told that it is part of the expenditure on unemployment relief. That is wrong. More than that the minister knows, as I know, that included already in amounts that have been named for unemployment relief, so-called, there are charges that ought to have been made against the mounted police vote, representing money required for the purpose of increasing the mounted police force; there have been expenditures for railway ties amounting to over a million and a quarter dollars which should have been charged to the railway account. There has been legislation respecting amendments of the Bank Act and the Insurance Act and matters of the kind which should never have been dealt with under relief, but rather under the appropriate enactments, and discussed in parliament in relation to that legislation. So I say the act commits us to a number of objects which we should not be asked to be committed to at all in any measure relating to the relief of the unemployed.

The other great objection, Mr. Speaker, is that under the guise of dealing with a condition of distress, and largely because of existing fear that out of this distress some critical situation may arise, we are being asked to establish a dictatorship in this country. This power given to the governor in council to do anything at all in the name of peace, order and good government, with an open treasury at hand, would enable the governor in council if it was so desired, as I mentioned in a previous discussion, to bring an army here to overawe parliament. That could have been done legally under this measure but for the adoption of the amendment which was passed a moment ago, even though parliament was in session at the time, no matter how parliament might protest under its own laws. They may wish a Mussolini in Italy, a Stalin in Russia or a Hitler in Germany, but we do not need a dictator in Canada; we do not need anyone exercising that sort of arbitrary autocratic authority in this country, nor do we wish Canada to be placed in the same category as those other countries in dealing with any domestic situation. I cannot repeat too often, Mr. Speaker, that the pride and security of British peoples with respect to all such matters lie in their parliamentary institutions, and this parliament is the body to which the people of Canada must and have a right to look to have taxation controlled, and for peace, order and good government in the true sense of the words. The less we get away from relying upon the will of parliament as a whole, rather than upon the individual will of a few men, no matter how