

Municipal Improvements

with a particular class of productive enterprise which we believe will contribute towards that end. But there are like measures to come.

Mr. HEAPS: I quite realize what the minister has said; I understand him thoroughly. But on that basis the money will not be spent in the places where it is most needed. For instance if there is a severe unemployment problem in Winnipig, Vancouver or Edmonton, a problem much greater than that in other large industrial centres, those cities cannot get more than the amount to which they are entitled, despite the fact that some other city does not need assistance. For instance if Toronto or any of the other large industrial centres does not make a request for funds, still the municipalities needing assistance will be able to receive only their proportionate amount, according to population. For the city of Winnipeg under present circumstances \$600,000 is a very small amount indeed, even to begin to take care of the unemployment problem. That is why I have a certain feeling of disappointment in the minister's statement this afternoon. I had expected he would outline a more comprehensive scheme. I am pleased to see that moneys are to be used for self-liquidating projects, but outside of housing I doubt if there are any schemes which could be styled as self-liquidating.

Mr. DUNNING: This is not intended to touch housing at all.

Mr. HEAPS: It is moneys distinct and apart from housing?

Mr. DUNNING: Yes, absolutely.

Mr. HEAPS: And do I understand another bill will come down to deal with the housing problem?

Mr. DUNNING: Absolutely; the Minister of Labour has so stated.

Mr. HEAPS: Then if that measure is not now before the committee, I do not wish to deal with it. If it is intended in the present instance to deal with problems other than housing, of course a great deal of my criticism is not valid on this particular occasion, and I will admit it right away.

Mr. THORSON: The question raised by the hon. member for St. Lawrence-St. George (Mr. Cahan) is one which the people of Canada must face. The sooner they do so the better for their welfare. It follows I think automatically from one of the recent decisions of the judicial committee of the privy council that this dominion parliament has no right to spend money in respect of

[Mr. Dunning.]

any object which comes within the legislative jurisdiction of the provinces. It would seem that this consequence follows directly from the decision of the judicial committee of the privy council in the unemployment insurance reference. If that is so, the right of this parliament to spend any money for any object that falls within the legislative jurisdiction of the provinces is challenged; that challenge places before the people of Canada the necessity of deciding what objects of legislation are to be deemed national in their scope and what objects are truly of a provincial nature.

Mr. CAHAN: Hear, hear.

Mr. THORSON: And the sooner we face that question the better for the people of Canada.

There are a great many problems that were originally provincial in their scope and were within provincial jurisdiction, and are still regarded as such by the courts, although the nature of the problem has changed. Many of these problems that were originally provincial in their nature have now become national in their scope and importance; that brings squarely before us the necessity of recasting our constitution so that this parliament may be vested with the necessary jurisdiction to deal adequately with national problems.

Mr. BENNETT: If that is established under the language of Lord Haldane, we might have jurisdiction.

Mr. THORSON: It would be difficult to follow all the by-ways and by-paths through which Lord Haldane frequently travelled in dealing with constitutional problems.

Mr. BENNETT: I had reference to his observation that an undertaking local in its character in the first instance might, by reason of changed conditions, become national in its scope.

Mr. THORSON: Quite; it was once thought that we had an elastic constitution that would be self-adjusting and bring that about, but the latest decisions of the judicial committee of the privy council have removed that hope from our minds, so that we must recast the constitution in order to give parliament the necessary power to deal adequately with national problems.

Therefore it would seem to me that we should consider subjects of this sort first from the viewpoint of whether they are really national or provincial in their scope. If they are national, then we should face these national problems squarely and make the necessary adjustments in our constitution so that this parliament may have the necessary power.