

Unemployment Continuance Act

sary measures adequately to deal with unemployment throughout the various municipalities of this country.

The Prime Minister then went on to discuss the Saskatchewan farm relief emergency, and again pointed with pride to the fact that three hundred thousand persons had been fed plain but ample food—that is his own language; had been provided with fuel, and in addition to both those, with medical care. All three had been, he stated, adequately provided. I am prepared to accept his word as I would that of any hon. member of this house, but let us analyze that statement. It means, with a total cost of \$5,250,000, which was the amount stated, the sum of \$17 per person for a period of six months, or 72 cents per week per person. That is, adequate food, adequate fuel, and adequate medical care was provided at a cost of 72 cents per person per week. My benediction, Mr. Speaker, on efficiency of that kind, and if that can be done throughout the country there certainly will be no criticism from me in regard thereto. The point I wish to make in that regard is that I would like to have the matter further discussed. I would like to find out the exact measure of relief that was extended to those districts, and whether it really was adequate as the Prime Minister would persuade us to believe. I will say this, however, that whether it was adequate or inadequate, we in the province of Alberta feel that we have a distinct grievance in regard to this matter. There are districts in Alberta suffering as acutely as any of the acute drought-stricken districts in Saskatchewan. Reading the Prime Minister's statement and listening to him the other day I would gather that the province of Alberta, having made a careful survey of the situation, was satisfied that \$140,000 was sufficient to take care of immediate requirements; that that is what they asked for. Is that correct? If the Prime Minister intended to say that that is all the province asked for and that it is satisfied with that amount, the statement is grossly misleading. The province is not satisfied with that. I have a telegram here from the Minister of Agriculture of the province of Alberta dated March 8, 1932, similar to telegrams which have been quoted by hon. members from other provinces:

Following wire to Minister Agriculture sets out our position relative seed grain.

Have been obliged make arrangements to assemble required amount seed grain for distribution dry area.

Having regard burden now thrown upon municipalities and provincial government respectfully urge dominion should assume one-third freight rates and one-third loss to municipalities resulting from such distribution.

[Mr. E. J. Garland.]

I understand that so far no satisfactory action has been taken by this government to meet the requests of the province in that regard. This is dire necessity in the province of Alberta. This need must be met. The government of the province of Alberta has asked this government to grant to certain areas in the province affected in exactly the same way as certain areas in the province of Saskatchewan just the same treatment as is being meted out to Saskatchewan, and we have been refused. This government has not indicated its willingness to treat certain areas in the province of Alberta, involving an area twelve or fourteen municipalities in extent—I am speaking from memory—in the same way that it has been treating like districts in the province of Saskatchewan. We do ask the government—I petition the Minister of Agriculture myself—that at the first opportunity he take this matter up.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I do not wish to interrupt, but Alberta has been given exactly the same opportunity.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): My information is to the contrary. I had a meeting with the cabinet in Alberta in January last, and both the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture of the province asked me to see that the matter was brought to the attention of the minister. I spoke to him the other day about it, urging that exactly the same measure of relief, that is one hundred per cent federal liability, should be assumed by the federal government in respect of certain areas in Alberta which were in precisely the same position as certain drought-stricken areas in Saskatchewan. I ask the Minister of Agriculture, is his government prepared to take upon its shoulders the burdens of paying one hundred per cent relief in the areas I have mentioned in Alberta on the same basis on which it is giving relief now in Saskatchewan? I pause for a reply.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): My understanding is that the Prime Minister met the government of Alberta in Edmonton and asked them the very definite question, had they any area with similar conditions to those prevailing in the seventy-six municipalities area in Saskatchewan, and that their answer was no. When I met them later on in the year they gave me the same word.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): What time was this?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): September or October.