

Mr. REID: Not municipal. It was understood last year that transients who came into municipalities would be taken care of by the provincial and dominion governments. That burden has not been assumed by the provincial governments. The municipalities had, first of all, to pay out all the relief, and then they were told by the provincial government they would receive only one third. The municipalities to-day are asking if the policy in the future with respect to direct relief should not be that the provincial and dominion governments assume 100 per cent of it. I do not think under present circumstances that that is too much to ask.

I desire to ask the minister these questions: First: Are the municipalities who wish to carry on public works, and who are in a position to submit a program, to be encouraged in the same way as last year by the provincial and dominion governments assuming a share of the cost? Second: What financial assistance will be given to municipalities who find themselves unable to meet any share of the cost of direct relief? It was said last year that the dominion government has no direct contract with the municipalities, that they must appeal to the provincial government first, which in turn appeals to the dominion, but I think it important that that should be known. I think a definite statement should also be made in regard to the land policy particularly as to British Columbia, because I notice in the Daily Province of April 29, this statement with regard to placing men on the land:

British Columbia to Place Men on Land  
Government had urged Ottawa to include settlement in relief plans.

Aid for farmers.

Greatly encouraged by the federal government's plan to put unemployed Canadians on the land, the provincial government hoped to-day to be able to go ahead with some of the land settlement schemes which it has been developing for some months.

Announcement in parliament that the federal government would include land settlement under its new unemployed legislation followed strong pressure from British Columbia in favour of this important new departure. Hon. R. W. Bruhn, minister of public works, took the matter up personally with Premier Bennett in Ottawa recently, explaining that British Columbia feels that many unemployed could be far better placed on the land than on roads or idle in relief.

I think it is desirable that a definite statement should be made that the federal government are boosting this along. I have already received letters asking what assistance will be given the farmers. Is the minister in a position to give an answer.

[Mr. Gordon.]

Mr. GORDON: It must be obvious to the hon. member that assistance of the kind outlined must, of necessity, be the subject matter of an agreement between ourselves and the province, and until this legislation passes I do not propose to try to prophesy what the terms and conditions of such an agreement will be. I cannot say anything further. It seems to me to be obvious. With respect to the works which the municipalities in British Columbia may wish to carry on as in the past, I have this observation to make. If the municipalities in British Columbia have so conducted their business, as has been suggested by the hon. member, that they find themselves now the most highly taxed people, per capita, in Canada, then I should say that they ought to be very careful about embarking on any scheme of works that will add to the burden of their municipal taxation. Any scheme which the municipalities may have in contemplation, for which they seek help from the province and the dominion, must of necessity, again, be a term of any agreement that may be entered into. These are matters absolutely dependent upon the necessities of the provinces as reflected through their own governments and conveyed to this government for review. That must be obvious.

Mr. BUTCHER: I wish to ask one or two questions. I do not know whether the first one is in order or not, but I shall ask it. Will the relief commission be continued in Saskatchewan? If the minister is in a position to answer that question, I shall be glad.

Mr. GORDON: Just here I would offer this tribute to the relief commission in Saskatchewan. I have heard only great commendation for the work these men have been doing. I stand to be corrected, but I am told that they are public-spirited men representing all shades of political opinion, who have given their time without charge in the interests of their province.

Mr. CAMPBELL: The three sides of politics.

Mr. GORDON: I hope there are three sides. That commission is a creature of the provincial government; it was set up by the province. From what I have heard of its work, I trust that the commission will continue its efforts; and, I believe, acting as they have been acting, purely with a desire to serve their province and, by serving their province, serving their country, and having the experience of the past year behind them, if the members of that commission continue