

liberty or control that is new to me. There is nothing that he has said in that regard in which I do not entirely concur. But when applied to these particular facts or circumstances, and the conditions which exist today, we must realize that when Professor Redlich, that eminent Austrian, developed his statements from historic conditions surrounding expenditures of public money in Great Britain, he then was not dealing with a world depression. He was not dealing with a world distressed; he was not dealing with universal chaos in economic affairs. He was dealing with the orderly, commonplace conduct of public business. And when Colonel Durell wrote his book and placed before his readers the historic aspect of the development of parliamentary control over public expenditures, with particular reference to the control of the House of Commons over such expenditures, he was not dealing with a condition where thousands of men and women were looking to the state for sustenance, for food, for clothing, or for support. He was not dealing with the congregation of people in great cities who had no employment. He was dealing with the orderly conduct of human affairs as they had been developed under our parliamentary institutions. And if I say to this chamber that it is my profound conviction that the extraordinary conditions which the world has seen develop during the past few years have not passed, I go further; notwithstanding the inherent right of hon. members to criticize everything done by the government, they will at least admit that there is no evidence of any abuse of authority, of any usurpation of power for the sake of power, or of any effort being made at any time by this executive or any member of this government to do anything other than what was honestly and earnestly believed to be in the interests of this young dominion.

It is on that ground that I put to the committee the overwhelming necessity imposed upon us of seeking this legislation again. I say frankly to this committee that if I could bring my mind to the belief that it was not necessary to ask parliament to confer upon the executive for the next eleven months—because the act expires on March 31, 1935—

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): With the qualification contained in section 10.

Mr. BENNETT: Well, those are qualifications with respect to expenditures which have to be paid because obligations were created. I thank the hon. member for bringing that to my attention. I think it would be fair to say that if I did not believe it were essential to ask this chamber to accept the legislation for

eleven months, I certainly would not ask for it.

To be vilified, to be held up to execration and abuse, is not a thing a man should seek who is endeavouring to serve the public. If by properly eliminating the legislation I could escape it, does it not appear to hon. members that I would do so? But because I cannot do that, and because I should be failing in my duty to my country if I were to do it, these clauses are in the bill. I ask the committee to believe that nothing but an overwhelming sense of duty and of obligation has induced us to place them there.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): May I ask a question before we leave this subject? Is it not a fact that in the agreements with the provinces no limitation is placed upon the provinces with respect to their expenditures? Are there limitations placed in the agreement?

Mr. BENNETT: No agreement with a province becomes effective until it has been approved by this government. And the estimate of the expenditure involved under it is always present, with the agreement itself. No blank authorization to spend unmentioned sums is conferred upon a province.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): That is, I am right in assuming that before the provinces may make any expenditures under the relief agreements, there must be an agreement for a fixed and definite sum with each province before expenditure takes place.

Mr. BENNETT: No, I said a moment ago that the exact sum is not mentioned. But an estimate is made when the application for approval of the expenditure is sent to the federal government. May I repeat the statement I made, lest it be misunderstood: In connection with direct relief there is not a limit placed upon the dollars which can be expended. The necessity is the measure of expenditure with respect to direct relief. I should like to make that point sufficiently clear. That is, if the provincial authorities caring for the necessitous poor at point A expend certain sums of money on each, we make a fixed contribution of a percentage or fractional part, and the exact sum which may be expended, of course, cannot be determined. But the character of relief which is to be afforded is imposed by a condition in the agreement that is made. Is that clear?

Mr. NEILL: May I suggest something which may solve what appears to be rapidly approaching a deadlock? The time cannot be very far removed when the government