

Q. So that your entire check consists of accepting the figures given to you by the reeve and members of the council of the municipality?

A. Yes, certainly.

There was no check-up, either provincial or federal. The conditions there were very bad, but they were not found out until some time later. In certain parts of the municipality, relief vouchers were distributed by being left, duly filled out, on the counters of certain merchants. The recipients picked up the particular vouchers they wanted. That continued for several months. There should be some control on the part of the federal administration to ensure that politics shall not enter into the administration of this act in any way. There would be little need to reduce relief payments to individuals if the administration costs were cut by the appointment of non-political relief administration.

An hon. MEMBER: Like 1930 to 1935.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: The hon. gentleman refers to 1930 to 1935. During that period we had that system in Saskatchewan and there was no suggestion of political interference.

Mr. GARDINER: Does my hon. friend not know that during that period there were relief dealings with about 200 municipalities, in one year, and about 300 in the other.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: No one expects that we can check up on the petty grafter who takes advantage of the farm placement scheme, but a municipality should not be permitted to expend money in this manner over a period of five, six and seven months. When 40 per cent of the money comes from the federal government, there should be some check-up. In this case \$92,000 was expended in twelve months upon relief in an area where, according to the government inspectors, only ten per cent of the people receiving relief should be receiving it. Will the minister tell the committee how much will be paid to the western provinces during the present year? Recently cuts have been made in the relief grants, and in consequence many people in the province have been placed in a most unfortunate position. The people in the drought areas have been forced to live under conditions which are absolutely unfair, unjustified and unconscionable. It is said that the dominion government made this cut. As a result these people have had to accept less than they had been receiving in the past, and in many instances their mode of living has dropped to below the sustenance level. The minister is courteous at all times and I feel sure he will give me an answer. I want to know the amount that it is anticipated will be paid to the provinces.

Mr. GRAHAM: Is the case to which the hon. member is referring, the Wakaw case?

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Yes.

Mr. GARDINER: The hon. gentleman was the defence counsel.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: The minister wants to know about the administration of relief in Saskatchewan. Let me point out to him what happened in connection with employment upon public projects in Regina. The provincial member for Regina took the stand that unless a man had been able to get his application for work initiated by the president of the Liberal association or, better still, by the Liberal member, he could not obtain employment on a public project.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): That is true all over.

Mr. STIRLING: Not only in Saskatchewan.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: The slogan, "To the victor belongs the spoils" was altered to, "Without initials you shall not have work."

Mr. GRAHAM: May I ask the hon. member another question?

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: One minute, please. Surely there should be some control, so that this sort of thing could not happen. The very suggestion even of any political influence should not be permitted to exist.

Mr. GRAHAM: Is it not a fact that the premier of Saskatchewan repudiated categorically and completely any such suggestion as was alleged to have been made by the member for Regina?

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: He repudiated it, yes, some two days later, after a public furore arose all over the province. I point this out as indicating, first, the necessity for control, and, second, the necessity for an assurance from the minister that the amount which will be paid in the western provinces has been determined and some indication as to the amount which has been determined upon.

Mr. McLARTY: In reply to the request which the hon. member made some time ago and which he has just now renewed as to the actual amount allocated by this government to Saskatchewan for material aid, I tell him quite frankly I have not that information. I think, in fact I know there has been no definite agreement arrived at between that province and the dominion. All I can do is to repeat that the amounts which will be set will be on the same basis as are set in all other provinces where material aid is granted, and we shall contribute our 40 per cent. I say