

*Unemployment Relief*

the province itself, which might be financially able to carry on that work. I should not like to see this government hand out to the province of Ontario or any other province any money for the ostensible relief of unemployment to be used in construction which the province can afford to pay for itself. What precautions will be taken to see that moneys contributed out of this fund will be properly protected?

Mr. BENNETT: Perhaps my hon. friend the former Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Euler) will do me the honour of glancing at the closing words of section 3. After reading those words I do not think he will be so apprehensive with respect to the matters about which he has spoken. They read as follows:

—granting aid to provinces and municipalities in any public works they may undertake for relieving unemployment.

No grant is made to the province. The right hon. the leader of the opposition (Mr. Mackenzie King) fell into that error, if I may use the word. Assistance is to be given to any province or municipality in any public work which they may undertake, that is presumably the actual undertaking of public work which in the judgment of the municipality and/or the province is regarded as being necessary to relieve unemployment. Grants will not be made for the construction of a provincial highway or any other highway except it be for the purpose of relieving unemployment. Of course, the federal authorities will exercise their discretion and will be satisfied that the undertaking comes within the description I have given, namely, of being a work undertaken by a municipality or a province for relieving unemployment. As has been stated already, a municipality might commence work to-day which ordinarily it would not commence until next year, and the federal authorities would see that that municipality was in no worse position because of that early commencement of work to relieve abnormal conditions which prevail.

Mr. EULER: Mr. Chairman—

The CHAIRMAN: I think my hon. friend is discussing section 3.

Mr. EULER: Not at all. I am inquiring as to the percentage which might be appropriated in any given instance. I do not think the Prime Minister apprehends my question. I am not referring to work initiated by municipalities. I am referring to what are known in the province of Ontario, for instance, as provincial roads, to which the municipalities

[Mr. Euler.]

do not contribute in any degree. It might be decided by the province of Ontario that in order to solve the unemployment question they should construct a purely provincial highway. The province has a duty to perform with regard to unemployment, as has been admitted already, and that responsibility might lead them to construct a highway without any assistance from this government. Would any part of this fund be used for the construction of a purely provincial highway, a highway in which no municipality is concerned, even though it be for the relief of unemployment?

Mr. BENNETT: It would be competent for the federal authorities to agree to assist in the work.

Mr. EULER: Is that contemplated?

Mr. BENNETT: It is not contemplated at the moment, but conditions change quite rapidly. I have very good authority for that statement; Sir Henry Thornton stated to the committee that conditions changed so rapidly that it might be found necessary to utilize an appropriation intended for one purpose for some other purpose because of the necessities of the occasion. If that statement could be applied with truth to any condition, it could be applied to the matter of unemployment.

Sir EUGENE Fiset: Mr. Chairman, in discussing section 2 of this bill I believe I have the privilege of completing the remarks which I commenced a few moments ago. I desire to assure my hon. friend the Prime Minister (Mr. Bennett) that I have no intention of either blaming or insulting him, nor do I desire to criticize any statement which he has made. However, I would remind him that in discussing this item yesterday he stated that the Canadian National Railways were not in the habit of submitting to the house or to the committee full details of the amount asked to be voted. My hon. friend stated that the estimates were submitted in blank and that no details were furnished to the house; that is quite true. He stated also that the printed evidence of the proceedings of the committee on railways contained no such details; that again is quite true. However, the hon. gentleman did not go far enough; if he had taken the trouble to ask any one of his supporters who happened to be a member of the committee on railways and shipping he would have been informed that not only was a verbal explanation given on every item submitted to the committee, but a typewritten booklet