

Unemployment Assistance

All this bill is doing, and all I am saying, is that it authorizes us to pay out of the consolidated revenue fund not more than 50 per cent of assistance toward those in the two groups, provided that those groups represent .45 of the population of a province. I have not said the bill does any more than that, but it is a great deal.

Mr. Pallett: No, I do not think the minister has said any more than that, Mr. Chairman; but I think the committee should know what is the over-all cost of helping these people, and how much of the over-all cost this government is paying. That is the difficulty the people of this country are concerned with, because they are the people who are paying it, and the municipal taxpayers are the people who are paying it. Let us not have any unintentional misleading with these figures. They say that figures lie and liars figure; nevertheless—

Mr. Martin: And that lawyers are liars.

Mr. Pallett: Since you are a member of the bar as well, it cuts both ways. There must be figures available, and surely to goodness the minister should be able to give them to the committee.

Mr. Martin: The hon. member is asking for the figures of the hard core in the provinces. I have not those figures.

Mr. Pallett: Is the minister saying that with all the machinery of this government, with the dominion bureau of statistics and all the rest of it, he is unable to say what the total cost of relief is in this country? That is a very sorry admission.

Mr. Martin: I did not say that; I said I have not those figures right here.

Mr. Fleming: Why have you not?

Mr. Pallett: Can the minister produce them?

Mr. Martin: Oh, certainly.

Mr. Pallett: Would you produce them?

Mr. Martin: Very gladly.

Mr. Pallett: When?

Mr. Fleming: Right away?

Mr. Pallett: Will you produce them before this clause passes?

Mr. Martin: No, I cannot.

Mr. Pallett: I think those figures are fundamental to the whole discussion.

Mr. Martin: I do not think they are fundamental to the title of the bill.

[Mr. Martin.]

Mr. Pallett: But the thing is that this .45 figure may be considerably too high, and perhaps we should be applying the .30 figure for all the provinces.

Mr. Martin: It might possibly help my hon. friend, who appears to be in a very unhappy state of mind, if we perhaps could stand clause No. 1 and go on to clause 2.

Mr. Fleming: As long as you do not move that further consideration be postponed.

Mr. Hamilton (York West): Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Martin: I have suggested that clause 1 stand and I just want to make sure it is agreed to let clause 1 stand and go on to No. 2. Would my hon. friend like to ask a question on clause 2?

The Chairman: Shall clause 1 stand with unanimous consent?

Mr. Hamilton (York West): On clause 1, Mr. Chairman—

An hon. Member: Before it stands.

Mr. Hamilton (York West): Before it stands, yes.

Mr. Martin: I have just made a proposal suggested by the hon. member for Peel, that we might let clause 1 stand and go on with the other clauses. I agreed to that, and I take it my hon. friend agrees that we will come back to that when we have the required information.

Mr. Hamilton (York West): What I have to say is designed to help the minister, if he will just let me conclude. If the minister wishes he can stand the clause immediately afterward but I am asking the indulgence of the committee at this point because the minister has indicated that he will bring in an amendment to the bill along the lines suggested by the hon. member for Prince Albert.

Mr. Martin: Making the agreement a partnership?

Mr. Hamilton (York West): Yes. If the minister is going to do that perhaps the observation I am going to make will not require a further amendment, but on the other hand perhaps something else will have to be done. May I direct the minister's attention to the notice clause contained in the bill, clause 4, subclause 1 paragraph (e) and also the notice clause contained in the agreement in clause 17. It seems to me there is room for two different interpretations as to what may result from this notice clause. In the bill itself it would indicate that the agreement goes for five years and then from year to year as a lease might run on, whereas