

*Unemployment Assistance*

**Mr. Martin:** In the case of Newfoundland, in the month of February, 1955, for instance, we would share in assistance for 18,115 people. In the case of British Columbia it is 13,449 out of 20,000.

**Mr. Barnett:** Mr. Chairman, I was wondering further whether the minister has a breakdown as to what would be the average payment per person for the provinces of Newfoundland and British Columbia respectively?

**Mr. Martin:** Well, the average payment in British Columbia would be around \$30. In the month of January it would be \$32.02 and in December \$31.01. That is the average cost per person to be shared by the province and the municipality or by one of those two and the federal government.

**Mr. Barnett:** How does that compare with the figure for Newfoundland?

**Mr. Martin:** My hon. friend knows, of course, that it is the province which fixes the rate, and consequently we have nothing to do with that. In the case of Newfoundland in the month of July, let us say, the average cost per person would be \$11. It is a little higher in February, \$11.21.

**Mr. Winch:** Mr. Chairman, I am somewhat hesitant about asking this question but I think it is one that has to be asked and I shall do so. As I understand this act it will now be possible, once it has been given royal assent, for those who are presently under the Disabled Persons Act to be brought under this act. As a matter of fact I think many who have been turned down under the Disabled Persons Act can now be brought under this act, but I also think the majority of those who are now drawing a disability pension are also eligible under this act. Would the minister explain what the situation will be under the two acts? As near as I can figure it out all those who are now under the Disabled Persons Act will be eligible under this act. That is my interpretation, and I would like to hear from the minister on that matter.

**Mr. Martin:** One or the other, but not both. In actual practice it would be wrong for a province or municipality to take a person who was properly in receipt of a disability pension and transfer him to this particular list. It is just as wrong as it would be to take a person who is in receipt of mother's allowance and put her on this list, as has been done; but the effect would be the same because it is a sharing program, assuming the monthly amount is the same.

**Mr. Winch:** Is the monthly pension exactly the same?

[Mr. Barnett.]

**Mr. Martin:** That is a matter to be determined by each province.

**Mr. Winch:** That is up to each province. In other words, if under the authority of this act which has an unlimited ceiling a province wants to give an allowance which is greater than under the Disabled Persons Act, the province could transfer the entire number of disability pensions to this act and it will be recognized by this government?

**Mr. Martin:** If it is greater, that is right.

**Mr. Winch:** If any province wants to give a greater allowance under this act than under the Disabled Persons Act you pay 50 per cent under this act; is that right?

**Mr. Martin:** My hon. friend has taken a hypothetical case. A case that is properly under disability allowance should be paid under disability allowance. If the amount is less, obviously there will be no trouble; but as the rate is fixed by the provinces and as we are subordinate to it my hon. friend states the situation correctly.

**Mr. Winch:** Thank you.

**Mr. Knight:** Mr. Chairman, I can foresee some difficulty arising out of the act because of its lack of universality. As I understand it there are four provinces—

**Mr. Martin:** No, six.

**Mr. Knight:** Six in and four out. In the case of transients or people who drift from one province to another—if people come, for instance, from Alberta to British Columbia—what is the situation? I take it these people will only be recognized if they come from a province which has signed the agreement with the federal government. What is the method by which these people can be checked or identified? When do they become eligible in their new residence?

**Mr. Martin:** If my hon. friend will look at section 5 of the agreement he will find there are no residence qualifications. In this particular matter we have taken the position that as this is a bill to help people in need it is a mistake to insist that they should have a residence qualification. My hon. friend is quite right. This must operate, of course, only in those provinces with which we have agreements. We have not yet succeeded in obtaining an agreement with the province of Alberta. I am very hopeful that we will do so, but the reason we have not is that the government of that province feels there should be a residence qualification. We have had to take the position that in our judgment, having in mind the particular character of this legislation, that is not a fair thing to do;