

a given way. I hesitate to say to the committee what I am about to say, but the truth is, a democracy being what it is, that every time you put in a measure a provision that the sum to be expended shall not exceed a given amount, at that very moment those who would be beneficiaries under the legislation immediately begin to claim their share of that amount. I say that with hesitancy, but unfortunately it is true.

Mr. DUPUIS: Would the right hon. gentleman permit a question?

Mr. BENNETT: Not just now; when I conclude I shall be glad to answer any questions.

Mr. DUPUIS: I was just going to refer to the \$20,000,000; it was not all spent.

Mr. BENNETT: And the claim to a share of the amount, generally based upon a population basis, unfortunately, creates a situation in which the test is no longer necessity but ability to get. Perhaps hon. members of this house may question that statement, but if they will make some investigations they will find that what I have said is exactly correct.

Then let us go one step further. The executive is being clothed with power to spend money for the purposes indicated, and it is true that the sum to be spent is not mentioned. It is not as though this were something unusual in this parliament. I need not again give the instances I have in mind, but the government of which the hon. member for West Edmonton was a distinguished member gave to the same executive, the same governor in council as is mentioned in this bill, authority, for instance, to guarantee the bonds to secure the money to construct the harbour bridge in Montreal, without mentioning any sum whatever in the bill. The result was that nineteen and a half million dollars were expended on that bridge and every year the people of Canada are taxed to secure the money to pay the interest on that amount.

Mr. YOUNG: You should take warning from that.

Mr. BENNETT: That was a public undertaking which was being constructed, where it was possible to ascertain with reasonable certainty the amount required. Here you have an uncertain condition. You have a situation which I hope and believe will be greatly improved as the months go by, but I say to this committee very frankly that it is my very sincere conviction that if we stated in this bill a given sum of money,

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every province would claim what it regarded as its share of that money to be expended for the purposes mentioned in the bill. I speak now not from guess work but from experience. If I ask this house to grant this power I say again to the committee that when they talk of usurpation of power and dictatorship, they would only have to endeavour to discharge the duties that have rested upon the executive during the last few years to realize the necessity for powers being conferred upon it to enable it to deal with any situation that may arise. And further, the very fact the power is there has had tremendous effect in enabling matters to be disposed of. Now, as Canadians we are all more or less familiar with business as it is done in the common, ordinary, everyday run of life. We are a cross section of the country. We know perfectly well that there is nothing quite so bad as to hold out the sign of something to get and create a competition for the getting of it on the basis that competition arises in connection with a democracy. Everyone of us knows that; there is not one of us who does not know it. I ask the committee just to apply their ordinary, everyday, run-of-mine judgment to this transaction, and to realize what we are endeavouring to do. Dear only knows we do not wish to add further cares to the ones we already have, or seek authority to do something which we believe is not in the interests of the country. Will the committee not realize that in endeavouring to discharge our duties we have thought only of the welfare of Canada, and not our personal welfare.

Sometimes I hear hon. members in this chamber talk as though members of the government derived some satisfaction or happiness from working eighteen hours a day, when in fact one might just as well be free of it all. I say to this house sincerely that I did hope it would not be essential to put a provision of this kind in the bill. It would not be fair for me to disclose to hon. members all the information which comes to one, or to this office—not to the man but to the office—from all parts of the world. I realize that the great experiments being conducted in various parts of the world have placed upon this country, situated as it is—because geography is a fact which we cannot change—terrific and at times almost terrifying responsibilities.

When I heard my friend from Vancouver Centre (Mr. Mackenzie) declaim, I could almost fancy I heard myself. I am fair enough to him to say that I thoroughly appreciate the position which he has taken; for there is nothing which he has said touching freedom,