

minister the moneys lent to them, this country would be assuming a responsibility for which its minister of finance had no statutory authority.

Mr. BOURASSA: And anyhow, not under this legislation.

Mr. BENNETT: No.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I do not think my hon. friend answered the question. I understood him to refer to works being constructed by the municipalities. As I understood the question it related to relief.

Mr. BENNETT: I thought the hon. member had said works. I would say, if relief is meant, the answer is in the affirmative. If the municipality were compelled to make payment for relief, the provincial authorities might conclude that they could not contribute, and if they applied to this government I assume the regulations would be sufficiently expansive, at least, not to leave the municipality bankrupt. The municipality might have paid relief to those dependent upon it as against starvation.

Mr. EULER: Yesterday or the day before I inquired of the Prime Minister whether in cases of municipalities requiring relief they were obliged to approach the federal government through the provinces. The Prime Minister then stated that that, he assumed, would be the practice which would be pretty well followed out, but that there was no hard and fast rule in the matter. I rather gathered from what he said a few moments ago that he is receding from that position.

Mr. BENNETT: If my hon. friend understood me to imply that this government would communicate with the municipalities, then I was misunderstood. I have tried to make it perfectly clear that in my judgment the channel of communication between this government and those seeking relief in one form or another must be the province and not the municipality. The provincial machinery is available and they can investigate—not we. Similarly, in connection with old age pensions, the entire machinery of investigation is provincial and not Dominion, although there are certain supervisory powers and powers of examination in relation to the correctness of accounts and matters of that sort.

Mr. EULER: The situation then is that the municipality must proceed through the medium of the province?

Mr. BENNETT: That is my present view as to how it should be done.

Mr. EULER: That is not my understanding of what was said the other day.

Mr. BENNETT: I tried to make it clear.

Mr. BOURASSA: The hon. member does not refer to cases where the municipality applies to the federal government for the construction of a work federal in its nature.

Mr. BENNETT: I was dealing only with municipal undertakings.

Mr. HEENAN: So far as I can see, the government have not yet determined just what disposition will be made of this \$20,000,000. I can readily see that the Prime Minister and the government will have to make up their minds as conditions arise and will frame regulations to meet those conditions accordingly. I hope the Prime Minister will get the appropriation through to-night so that he may get down to work as soon as possible. In view of the fact that the Minister of Lands and Forests of Ontario made a public statement recently, that they are prepared to start their work on the trans-Canada highway, in the event of the federal government intimating to the province its willingness to give reasonable assistance, I wonder whether any portion of the \$20,000,000 will be used for that purpose.

Mr. BENNETT: I intimated yesterday that I thought it might be a proper source of expenditure, but I did so without having before me any details. I assure the hon. member that with the thousands of cases that must necessarily arise and with respect to which the provinces are daily receiving communications from those who are concerned, it would be idle for me to attempt to anticipate and express an opinion concerning a matter that has not been presented by a province, and with respect to which the province has not made any submission to the Dominion.

Mr. HEENAN: I know that there is some unemployment in some parts of northern Ontario. I do not want to fill Hansard with what the provincial Minister of Lands and Forests has said, but only recently he made a public statement which appeared in the press to the effect that the provincial government is prepared to start at once on the construction of its portion of the trans-Canada highway, provided that some assurance could be given by the federal government that reasonable assistance, as he put it, would be granted. I am not in accord with my colleague the ex-Minister of National