

work for relief policy as conducted by some municipal authorities. The situation is not clearly understood. It is sometimes held that the unemployed are unwilling to work, but from my experience I assure the minister that more usually it is a case of their protesting against the exploitation of their circumstances by the municipal authorities. Very frequently they are required to work at heavy manual labour, on the regular maintenance work of the city, without any additional allowance for the protective work clothing that is required on work of this nature, and without any provision for the extra nourishment required for the satisfactory performance of heavy manual labour. To do this work satisfactorily they must receive a larger food allowance, and it means that the rest of the family and the children suffer in order that the head of the house may have adequate nourishment for the performance of the heavy manual labour required. I think it is the duty of the federal government to ask the employment commission to insist that proper working conditions be established for these men if they are required to work for their relief allowance; otherwise great distress results and a definite injustice is done to these men. If they are required to work when they are on relief and to attain to a proper standard of efficiency on the job, proper working conditions should be insisted on and some extra allowance made in the way of protective work clothing and the extra nourishment that is definitely necessary.

Mr. ROGERS: My hon. friend has touched upon a very important and I may say a very perplexing feature of the relief problem. If I understood him aright, he suggested that there should be a uniform relief scale throughout the country. I suppose he is aware that uniform scales do not exist even within any one province. In the past the dominion government has contributed directly to the provinces and through the provinces to the municipalities, working upon the well established principle that the municipalities and provinces had organizations which had been accustomed to deal with this problem in the past. As a matter of fact the dominion has not sought to impose any definite relief scale upon any province or municipality. I am sure my hon. friend is aware that different standards of living prevail in different parts of the dominion and even in different areas in a province. For example, a scale of relief that might seem meagre in a city would be generous in a country district because of the difference in cost of rentals, food and so on. I recognize with my hon. friend that this is a

question which deserves careful study, but it seemed to me that he emphasized the need of a national employment commission to place this and other features of the problem in a national focus.

Mr. MacNEIL: Will the minister deal with the work for relief policy?

Mr. ROGERS: I think that would also fall under what I have just said. I quite agree that the policy of work for relief is one that deserves further study. As it stands now, each province has followed its own policy and the dominion government has not sought to interfere in any way.

Mr. BENNETT: The minister is not quite correct with respect to the dominion having taken steps. In connection with the dried-out areas in Saskatchewan the dietitians prepared a balanced diet and the allocation of food was based upon that diet. In Manitoba a great deal of care was taken by the officials in dealing with the matter, and in one other western province they dealt with it from the standpoint of what was a proper diet for those who were on relief, having regard to the conditions in which they found themselves and the work in which they could be engaged. It is well known that in the border cities, for instance, a great deal of time was spent in preparing a balanced diet, which had the most excellent results. I was told by one medical officer that the children especially emerged from the season on relief much better in point of health than they had been for many years because of the excellent care taken to provide a balanced diet in that locality.

Mr. ROGERS: Undoubtedly the entire question of what should be the minimum to provide proper health and vigour is very important. I agree entirely with my hon. friend that this matter would repay very careful study. At the recent dominion-provincial conference I was impressed by the fact that the delegations from the various provinces had very little information as to what was going on in other provinces. Each province was working out its own problem in its own way. I am quite convinced that some disparities must continue to exist, especially with regard to administration and probably with regard to relief scales. There must be considerable flexibility, and it is set out clearly in the bill that it is the view of the government that this entire problem should be considered in the terms of its national implication.

Mr. PELLETIER: It is apparent from what has been said that the conditions to be