

connection with the work of an organization of this kind. Many of these organizations have attached to them experts who could advise upon the best methods of administering relief.

The minister stated this evening that, in connection with the western provinces, commissions had been formed composed of public spirited men and women who were carrying on the relief work. Cannot public spirited men and women be found in sufficient numbers to serve on a national commission? I think he said commissions had been appointed in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. These commissions have come into being quite recently. The government borrowed a doctor from the Canadian Pacific Railway, we were told, to help form the commissions. Had the plan suggested by the opposition at the outset been followed, there would have been one national commission under which could have been organized provincial commissions, not only in four provinces but in all provinces. These provincial commissions would have had under their direction bodies in the different municipalities which would have been responsible for the more immediate local organization. All agencies would have been knit together in one comprehensive, constructive and highly organized scheme of unemployment relief. The problem would have been tackled in a manner which would have avoided overlapping, and which would have resulted in the minister being able to present to parliament, not merely a story of the amounts of money that have been spent, but a very comprehensive story of what had been permanently achieved in the way of providing work, work of necessary construction of one kind and another. There would have been, too, a fund of information and knowledge, available for the present and future.

The policy of having a representative national committee is one which was urged by the opposition, not only at the outset, but one which has been urged each year and every session since. I still urge this policy upon the government. I think the government ought even yet to form such a commission. In his concluding remarks, the minister said that one of the things the government had discovered was that neither it nor the provinces nor the municipalities were organized for work of this kind; that is exactly what we said would be found. The minister added that little by little all had become more familiar with what was necessary and were now in better shape. I would suggest to the minister that he take out of these quasi-organized

groups the best persons that can be found and bring them together on a national board which will have to do with the supervision of this vast expenditure of public moneys, and also for devising some comprehensive, correlated national scheme of unemployment relief. Let that board be responsible for submitting to this parliament a comprehensive statement of what is being done in Canada from coast to coast by all bodies having to do with relief; and what it recommends should be done; and let its recommendations be discussed in this parliament.

Unemployment to-day is worse than it has been at any time. At each session we have had our attention drawn to the fact that conditions, instead of getting any better, have been getting steadily worse and worse. They will continue to get worse unless the government adopts the most enlightened means possible to help to meet the situation. I repeat that there could be no stronger argument for a policy for the administration of relief such as we on this side have been urging right along than what we have just listened to from the minister himself.

I know that the Prime Minister (Mr. Bennett) has said on more than one occasion that the provinces have to administer relief, that it is not for the federal government to do this work. I have replied to that by stating what is the fact, namely, that the federal government has the right to adopt any plan it pleases, and attach any condition it pleases, to the expenditure of its own moneys. I am not asking that the federal government should administer provincial or municipal relief, but I am asking that the federal government, when it takes from the pockets of the people millions of dollars in order to make a contribution out of their taxes for relief purposes, should at least assume the responsibility of supervising the entire scheme, particularly when unemployment has reached the proportions it has, and should, if at all possible, seek to make its plan of relief coherent as well as comprehensive.

The minister has drawn his picture of what the government is doing. When we come to view it closely, it will be found to be largely the story of the amounts of public money being expended. In its most important features that is about all that it comes to, an orgy of public expenditure. As a matter of fact the minister, in giving the facts to parliament, rather stressed the largeness of the sums of public money that were being paid out in different directions, as though simple largeness of amounts were wholly com-