

power with the British government for the purposes indicated in the speeches to which I have referred, and which fully express my opinions with respect to this matter.

Mr. MacNEIL: Would the minister indicate when these destroyers will be commissioned in the Canadian Naval Service?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): Oh, they have been commissioned since some date early in March, and they are now on their way to Canadian shores. I believe that yesterday they were in Barbadoes.

Mr. DOUGLAS: Could the minister tell us how old these destroyers are, and what they cost when originally built by the British admiralty?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): They are a little over four years old. They were completed in 1932 at a cost of \$1,384,300 each.

Mr. MacNEIL: Are they classified as obsolete by the British naval service?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): No, they are absolutely modern and in first-class condition.

Mr. MacNEIL: What refitting was necessary before their despatch to Canada?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): Just a general observation of their condition as regards engines and other equipment, in the dockyards in England.

Item agreed to.

Governor General's Warrants—To provide for direct relief expenditures in the drought areas of the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta (Governor General's warrant of October 7, 1936): \$7,300,000.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: These are Governor General's warrants. My right hon. friend said the other evening that he thought it was quite proper to use the Governor General's warrants for the purposes of drought relief, so he might be prepared to let this item pass.

Mr. BENNETT: No. The point upon which I want information is the extent of the expenditures and for what purposes they were made, up to and including the present month, so that there may be on the record a memorandum of what money has been spent. I have regard to what the Prime Minister has often pressed very strongly upon us, namely the desirability of keeping within the terms of that section with respect to the expenditures themselves. It will not take long.

[Mr. Bennett.]

Mr. DUNNING: Under feed and fodder expended under Governor General's warrants—this is up to March 23, and my right hon. friend will understand, of course, that expenditure is going on continuously—

Mr. BENNETT: I do.

Mr. DUNNING: Manitoba, \$200,000; Saskatchewan, \$2,700,000; Alberta, \$1,800,000; that is for feed and fodder. Under direct relief: Manitoba, \$300,000; Saskatchewan, \$4,500,000; Alberta, \$2,500,000.

Mr. BENNETT: Does that mean that that much money has actually passed the comptroller?

Mr. DUNNING: That money was actually disbursed up to March 23. I could give the totals.

Mr. BENNETT: No, that is all right.

Mr. POULIOT: Alberta was not forgotten.

Mr. BENNETT: By what method was the fodder and feed purchased?

Mr. GARDINER: The method under which it is distributed?

Mr. BENNETT: No, purchased.

Mr. GARDINER: The provincial government made the actual purchases of the feed and fodder.

Mr. BENNETT: In all the three provinces?

Mr. GARDINER: Yes, in all three provinces. The federal government did the grading of the hay in all three provinces; that is, we had graders grading the hay in the parts of the provinces where the purchases were made. The payments of freight, of course, were made by the provincial government to the railway companies, shipping from the northern parts of the province to the southern areas. The distribution was made at the point of distribution through the municipal council, and again the distribution was checked by federal inspectors, and the payments when made were on the basis of prices that were established in the agreements entered into. That is, maximum prices were established for the different grades of fodder; the prices paid for grain were the market prices plus the freight. I think the way in which it is stated is this: It is the market price at Fort William less the freight from the shipping point to Fort William, plus the freight from the particular point at which the grain was purchased to the point at which it was distributed, plus a premium of three cents per bushel. That, I think, pretty well covers it.

Mr. BENNETT: Will the particulars of the \$7,300,000 and the \$4,940,000 appear in the Auditor General's report, or just as lump sum distributions to the provinces?

Mr. DUNNING: So many thousands of accounts are involved that I doubt if particulars can be given. I appreciate the desirability of doing so.

Mr. BENNETT: The minister sees the point, having regard to the terms of the statute regarding Governor General's warrants.

Mr. DUNNING: I shall be glad to take up that point. I may tell my right hon. friend that, in order to cover the matter as fully as possible, the comptroller of the treasury was instructed at the commencement to put his whole organization in to control expenditures, having regard to the fact that we were through the provincial governments, even under the regulations that the Minister of Agriculture has already described, expending funds under Governor General's warrant. There is, of course, pre-audit continuously going on by the Comptroller General's agents at the various provincial capitals.

Mr. DOUGLAS: I should like to take this opportunity of drawing to the attention of the government something which I have already referred to the Minister of Agriculture; I allude to the very pressing need at the present time of seed and feed for seeding.

Mr. DUNNING: If the hon. member was in the house he must have heard the Prime Minister indicate to-night that one of the measures to be brought down this session is with respect to the guarantee of seed grain. If my hon. friend would be good enough not to confuse that issue with this, it will make it a great deal easier for all of us.

Mr. DOUGLAS: I am not intending to confuse it. I understand from the statements of both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture that a bill is being brought down to that effect. I merely wanted to touch on the fact that while this is going to provide for feed and fodder for the year which is just about completed, there is at this time a very great need of seed and feed, and immediate action in that respect is necessary. I have had a number of letters and telegrams particularly from municipal bodies, who are usually responsible men and who are feeling the pressure of circumstances. I have one here which I would call to the attention of the committee:

Council R. M. Weyburn very much opposed to reduction seed and seeding supplies revised schedule of distribution wholly inadequate feed situation deplorable ratepayers enraged by

government action reversion of reductions imperative to forestall otherwise probable drastic outbreaks seriousness of situation cannot be over estimated immediate action dominion government absolutely necessary.

L. D. Kusch,
secretary treasurer.

I shall have something further to say when the actual legislation is before the house, but I do think that the present situation in the drought area ought to impress upon the house the necessity for the money that was spent last year and the importance of keeping in mind the necessity for a large grant when we come to discuss this matter in connection with the minister's bill.

Mr. QUELCH: Can the minister say where the responsibility lies for defining a drought area? It is hard to draw a line and say that drought relief shall be given on one side and not on the other. Several instances have been brought to my attention where injustice has been done. I drew the matter to the attention of the provincial government and they referred me to the federal government as the responsible authority. I then took it up with the representative, Mr. Chester, who informed me that the provincial government was responsible. I found it almost impossible to get either side to take the responsibility.

Mr. GARDINER: The responsibility can scarcely be said to rest wholly either on the provincial government or on the federal government. The representatives of all three western governments came to Ottawa last September and conducted negotiations with the federal government for assistance. At that time we made a check of the conditions in the west, and the provincial governments also had a check made. They presented to us a list of the municipalities which they estimated would require feed and fodder and direct relief during the winter months. We checked up on their representations with regard to municipalities, and I believe the number presented first by the government of Saskatchewan was in the neighbourhood of a hundred and fifty municipalities, and in Alberta one hundred and twenty-five; in Manitoba there was a group that represented probably about thirty or forty municipalities to begin with.

After we had made our final check, both federal and provincial, the province of Alberta was inclined to the belief that about eighty would have to come in before the end of the season, Saskatchewan about one hundred and twenty-five, and Manitoba about twenty-five.

Then we went over the entire list again and reduced the number for Alberta to about