

REGINA—COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn) (for Mr. Coldwell):

For a copy of all correspondence, telegrams, and other documents in the possession of the department, relative to the granting of an extension of one year to the collector of customs at Regina, Mr. J. H. Spooner, who attained the age of 65 and became eligible for superannuation on January 8, 1938.

UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF

FEDERAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR DIRECT RELIEF—
CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM AFFECTING SOCIAL
SERVICES

Mr. T. L. CHURCH (Broadview) moved:

That, in the opinion of this house, the government be requested to consider making direct relief, and also in part, urgent relief works, a federal responsibility entirely and not a municipal or provincial one, notwithstanding the provisions of any law, statute, usage or custom to the contrary;

And also consider a new measure of constitutional reform adapted to Canada's present-day circumstances so as to afford a more ready, just, equable and more immediate remedy and basis of dealing with all of Canada's social services of all and every kind, thus providing a quicker solution of the same and more equality of treatment for all provinces of confederation on the principle of each for all and all for each;

And, if deemed advisable, a select committee of the house be appointed to make a study and review of the whole question and report back to the house as quickly as possible.

He said: This resolution has been on the order paper since January 27 last. I did not know until the moment it came up yesterday of another such motion to go into supply. But, after all is said and done, the discussion yesterday will do no harm, although it anticipated this prior motion. In regard to the remarks I made last night, I believe from what the late Right Hon. Austen Chamberlain said that one will find as I have found the House of Commons to be a place of much kindness. I found also that the House of Commons is a sort of gentlemen's club. If I made any personal remarks last night it was the first time since I have been a member. But I say now that I am very much disappointed at the stand taken by the minister as far as the municipalities are concerned. I did not speak last night for the city of Toronto, far from it; my remarks were national in scope, not provincial, not municipal. They related to a problem which is Canada's greatest domestic problem since we have been a country, the care of the health, comfort, welfare and well-being of all the citizens of this country. That should be the supreme interest of parliament.

I am sorry if this resolution is taking up too much time, but too much time cannot be

given to this chief domestic problem. This is the twenty-fifth day since parliament met and what have we done for the average forgotten man, the industrial worker, the farmer and the toiler who have no work by which to earn a living? Nearly all hon. members are owners of real estate; many of them know conditions better than I do; the medical men who visit these people, the social workers, the municipal workers, know the conditions that exist. Parliament meets and does nothing about the matter. The motion before the house to-day puts directly on the House of Commons full responsibility for the solution of this problem.

I was asked a question by an hon. member last night. I am sorry I did not know what his question was. I had no time to answer questions. Had I known what the hon. gentleman was asking I should have answered. He asked me what remedies I had. I did propose remedies. During the debate on the appointment of the Purvis commission I laid this matter right at the doorstep of the government and the gentlemen on the front benches and proposed remedies; I pleaded the cause of the man on the street to the man in the cabinet. I was very much disappointed last night at the reply which the minister made in the house. I gave concrete cases; I quoted conditions in forty cities all over Canada.

The government of the day is responsible for the solution of these problems as long as it is the government. Under the principles of responsible government the responsibility is not on members of the opposition; it is not on the private members. Under the constitutional practice from the days of Edmund Burke the government of the day is responsible to the electors for the way it administers the country, this sacred trust, as long as it is the government.

This resolution of mine is divided into two parts. It places the burden of relief where it belongs, on the federal government. I was asked last year by some municipalities to bring this matter up. They were of the opinion that the dominion government is the only body which can solve this problem, inasmuch as that government controls the tariff, trade and commerce, banks and banking and bills of exchange, and immigration. They brought the people into the country. This view of the municipalities was recently emphasized at the meeting of mayors. They asked that relief be borne forty per cent by the dominion, forty per cent by the provinces and twenty per cent by the municipalities. Some ten years ago when the hon. member for Winnipeg