

Mr. MANION: That is not what was asked; we were asked to give the names and the prices and to furnish copies of the contracts.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): I am very glad to see the Minister of Labour (Mr. Gordon) present for once in his seat. The Minister of Railways is confusing two entirely different issues.

Mr. HACKETT: The Minister of Labour is in his seat every day all the time.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): One of these issues deals with the normal expenditure of certain moneys voted with regard to the Canadian National Railways. When certain criticism was made from this side of the house in connection with chapter 58, we were told that there were two different types of expenditure; there were expenditures directly under the control of the federal government, and there were expenditures under the joint control of the federal government and the various provincial governments. We asked specifically, not only last year but in 1930, that there should be control by the Auditor General of Canada over all funds, including those which are a direct national responsibility and those jointly controlled by the provinces and the dominion. The position was taken at that time by the Prime Minister, and possibly he was partly correct, that we had no authority to investigate the expenditures made by the provinces.

Mr. BENNETT: Beyond being satisfied that the money was actually expended. That is, if we had cause to suspect that it was not being spent, then we could investigate. I elaborated upon the matter at the time.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): That is quite satisfactory for the sake of my argument. Apart from the discussion in connection with railway ties, I contend that the Auditor General should satisfy himself, through the officers of the Department of Labour, who administer this fund, that this money has been properly expended by the province of British Columbia or any other province for the purpose for which it was voted by parliament.

The vote of \$1,300,000 made for the Canadian National Railways had nothing whatever to do with the previous customs of this parliament in regard to votes of money for the national railway. I recall the words of the Prime Minister uttered when this special act was passed in 1930. He said that this government accepted the responsibility for all expenditures. The other day the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Reid) asked

the Minister of Railways for certain information in regard to the order in council which had been passed. Where did the authority for that order in council come from? It came from the clause in chapter 58 of the statutes of 1931 which deals with peace, order and good government. In other words, the minister derived a special authority from a special statute; under that special authority he passed a special order in council and under that special order in council a special expenditure was made. He now comes and tells this committee of the parliament of Canada that we are not entitled to the fullest information in regard to every single detail of that expenditure.

We have before us a very commendable document in the form of the report of the director of unemployment relief. This document gives a comprehensive analysis of all the expenditures made under the act of last year. Certain details are submitted for the information of hon. members who voted last year for chapter 58—some of us, of course, under compulsion—but I submit that we are entitled to receive the fullest information on all items. This report covers expenditures which were entirely national in character as well as those which were partly national and partly provincial. Details are given of special expenditures which were entirely national in character and with which the provinces were not concerned. The minister has stated that this item totalled less than a million dollars, but the order in council calls for two million ties at a cost not exceeding 65 cents each. I suggest that this committee is entitled to the fullest and most definite information in connection with this item. We are entitled to know the names of every single contractor for the supplying of ties to the Canadian National Railways. We are entitled to this information because this was a special act, passed under special conditions to deal with what the Prime Minister this afternoon has called a special emergency. We are entitled to know the names of the various station men who went out into the woods in the various provinces of Canada and—

Mr. BENNETT: The Canadian National Railways would not know that.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): They should know it.

Mr. BENNETT: How?

Mr. McMILLAN (Huron): If the right hon. gentleman was a business man, would he not know? Is there an hon. member in this committee who, if he were a business man looking after his business, would not know?