

I shall refer particularly to some allegations made by the hon. member for New Westminster, speaking in this house on March 16. I shall read a letter dealing with these allegations, and I am sure it will be found to be illuminating and of value to hon. members of this house. Under date of March 23, I received the following letter from Hon. R. W. Bruhn, Minister of Public Works at Victoria:

For your information I am enclosing memorandum from Mr. Philip to myself, in connection with the statements made by Mr. Reid in Hansard of March 16. I also enclose one of my speeches which I delivered in the house here, giving further information in regard to unemployment relief in British Columbia.

As there have been some comments on the cost of lumber, for your information I may say that the average cost per thousand feet of lumber, delivered at the camps, is \$20.60. The average cost per camp, including equipment, per man, is \$36.46. This is considered rather low.

The statements made by Mr. Reid and other speakers are without foundation, and you are quite safe in making that statement should you have an opportunity to do so, as the unemployment committee here has so far found nothing to warrant such statements.

The following is the memorandum of Mr. Philip, chief engineer, to Mr. Bruhn:

With reference to the speech of Mr. Thomas Reid in the House of Commons, page 1283 of Hansard.

Employment of men: We have employed almost 25,000 on unemployment relief works, instead of 16,000.

Twenty-three Delco plants were purchased, some of them second-hand, not 100 as given to Mr. Reid by a truck driver. Possibly if Mr. Reid would apply to the proper quarters for information his data would be more reliable.

With reference to the water supply; it is true that a well was dug where the supply was insufficient owing to the dry weather at a cost of \$75, and another well was dug on which a total of \$22 was spent. It was not necessary to use this well as the water became plentiful in the first one which was dug, owing to weather conditions. This is the scandal Mr. Reid takes the time of the House of Commons to investigate.

As to the manufacturer who told Mr. Reid that he had sold 50,000 blankets and "It took him out of the red." The facts are that 7,700 pairs of blankets were bought new and 420 pairs second-hand, making a total of 8,120.

As for the steel wheelbarrows, he may have counted these in one camp for distribution throughout other camps. As to a man appointed to regulate their use, this is too ludicrous to even discuss.

With regard to the coal: This was bought locally in Mission and hauled to the camp for cook-house ranges. It was found when these ranges were purchased that they had coal-burning grates but this was rectified as soon as possible. No coal was purchased by the carload.

As to the tenders for cutting wood, this refers to Alloco camp. At one time the supply ran out and no available wood could be had less than three miles from the camp, which had

to be delivered on the logging railway. A small contract amounting to one or two hundred cords of wood was advertised in the regular way and some local settlers took the contract.

With regard to the government road foreman who had \$50,000 in the bank: We have no knowledge of this, but if the information given by Mr. Reid is as reliable as the blankets, wheelbarrows, the water supply, the coal and the grader which was unable to turn on the road, then I submit that very little attention should be paid to the hon. member, Mr. Thomas Reid.

That is the memorandum of Mr. P. Philip, chief engineer and Deputy Minister of Public Works.

I should like to make a passing reference to the remarks of the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Neill). One statement was as follows:

One might say they were equipped almost luxuriously with hot and cold water shower baths, electric lighting plants, and I am informed even radios have been supplied in some cases.

A reply to this statement is made by the Minister of Public Works at Victoria in the following words:

Camps were built according to standards laid down by provincial health regulations of 1920. Shower baths with hot and cold water were put in in permanent camps as called for in these regulations. Showers were in the proportion of one to twenty or twenty-five men. The cost of these showers was approximately \$7 each, and consisted of lumber and tarpaper stalls, with platform of slats and timber drain.

There were twenty-three lighting plants purchased or enough for approximately ten per cent of the camps. Some of these plants were bought second-hand and have a high salvage value. The cost of lighting by electric light was carefully estimated and when the period over which the lights were to be used and the salvage value of the plants were considered, it was found that in large permanent camps electric light was cheaper than coal oil or gasoline lamps.

Misinformation as to radios: There were none purchased.

Another statement by the hon. member was as follows:

The tools were furnished on a scale never known before in connection with roadwork. Every man had a wheelbarrow; every man had a ten-foot saw, which was entirely unnecessary, and everything was done on a lavish scale.

The answer is as follows:

Regarding tools: The statement that each man had enough tools to suffice for ten, is a very loose statement and is entirely contrary to fact. Public works inventories show that for the number of men to be employed, namely 16,000, there was one wheelbarrow for every 7 men and one cross-cut saw for every 11 men.

Perhaps one can hardly blame hon. members for making such statements when it is considered that the former provincial Speaker and