

*Unemployment*

ought to know what trend it will take, what industries it will affect and how the particular corporations, partnerships and individuals shall be selected by the government or by the national employment commission.

Mr. ROGERS: I am in the judgment of the committee when I say that I dealt with that clause earlier in the evening. If my hon. friend will read Hansard to-morrow he will find the statement.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I say a word to the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. MacInnis) in reference to the Fair Wages and Hours of Labour Act? I do not know what interpretation he drew from the reading of the section by the leader of the opposition, whether he regards the act as applying to subsidies, as a result of what he heard. Perhaps he can tell me.

Mr. MacINNIS: I take it that the act does not apply.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Then that raises the whole question all over again. The minister told us a little while ago that the act applies to any undertaking that is subsidized by the government. There is no doubt whatever that the steamships are subsidized by the government; the very word "subsidy" that is used in the act is used. It might very well be that it was considered in the interest of employment that a new line of boats should be established between here and New Zealand or some other country, in which case, if I understand the Prime Minister aright, he takes it for granted that the act will not apply.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: No, my hon. friend is mistaken.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Well, will he not say whether or not in his judgment it applies?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I shall if my hon. friend will give me a chance. I raised the question particularly because I did not wish the hon. gentleman to be under any misunderstanding as to the application of the act, and did not want my hon. friend who has just spoken to say later that I was here and had heard what was read and acquiesced as to the act applying to subsidies to steamships. As I read it—and this was my idea in wishing to have an opinion of the justice department somewhere at hand—the act is confined to public works:

Whenever the grant or payment of any public moneys of Canada is authorized or made by way of contribution, subsidy, loan, advance or guarantee,—

Not for steamships, but—

—for or in aid of the construction, remodelling, repair or demolition of any work—

[Mr. Douglas.]

Mr. BENNETT: See the title of the act itself.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The title of the act is:

An act respecting fair wages and hours of labour in relation to public works and contracts.

Mr. TAYLOR (Nanaimo): Has the government determined what percentage the contribution from the national fund will be to the whole expenditure on this relief question? I ask that because the discussion of this bill opens up all kinds of holes in the whole fabric. We have the hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard (Mr. McGeer) complaining that the municipalities are being swamped and rendered bankrupt by the continued expenditure on relief. Heretofore the disposition of the government has been to consider these advances as advances merely, and not as accepting a definite responsibility in connection with unemployment. Now it is becoming increasingly obvious that we cannot have complete employment in Canada; that unemployment is on the increase, no matter what may be said to the contrary. If that be the case, as the federal government have the whole field of taxation in their control, and the provinces and municipalities have a very limited field of taxation, it must be apparent that the federal government must bear an increasing part of the load. Has the minister anything to say in that connection?

Mr. ROGERS: It is not possible at this time to say what precise percentage of the entire relief expenditure in Canada will be borne this year or next year by the dominion government. The dominion government have tried to meet the situation upon the basis of recognizing an obligation which it shares with the provinces and municipalities, but only when the burden was beyond the municipality and then beyond the resources of the province. That is the position taken consistently during the past few years. It has appeared at times that contributions made by the dominion government should be increased, recognizing the growing burden upon municipalities and provinces. But it is not possible to say what will be the precise percentage of the entire burden which will be borne by the dominion government.

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): I do not wish the minister to repeat his answers unnecessarily, but I understand from his statement that the bill enables the government to give subsidies and contributions to industry. I understand further, although he did not say so, that it would enable them to give subsidies and contributions to agriculture, if the national em-