

*Unemployment*

volved this has proved to be a much more satisfactory method of dealing with at least a part of the relief problem than the payment of direct relief to these families in the cities. We have also reason to believe that the environment has been much healthier for the families who have been thus moved from city to countryside under these relief settlement schemes. In addition to these schemes, these agreements which have been concluded with the provinces, certain proposals have been made by some of the provinces having in view larger plans of colonization, which I take it is what my hon. friend has in mind, and I am sure he will be the first to agree that a plan for colonization which would have some prospect of success in one province might be faced with almost certain failure in another; we have such a wide diversity of conditions in this country. I may tell him that in the view of at least two provinces, eastern provinces as it happens, colonization does provide a hopeful approach to the unemployment problem—not by any means a complete solution but what one might term a contribution to the solution of the unemployment problem.

Mr. MacNICOL: I wish to make an observation with reference to the following words in subsection 2 of section 3:

... persons who being available and competent are necessarily and properly in receipt of relief in the province in which such work or undertaking is to be performed.

I have been wondering about relieving the plight of a large number of people who are not on relief but who should be and who would be were it not for their humble pride in refusing to go to the relief centre and sign their names. I know of many people like that who are in very destitute circumstances and I can appreciate their reluctance to go to one of the relief centres. A short time ago the head of a family came to see me about something in connection with relief, and I determined to go to one of the relief centres to ascertain particulars in reference to what he wanted to know. When I arrived at the relief centre I saw a line a hundred yards long of citizens who were on relief and who were then applying to the relief centre to obtain whatever it is they get there. When I saw that long line I had not the courage to wait my turn to enter the relief office; I turned and walked away. There are many people like those I refer to, and I wonder if the minister has anything in view for such people whereby they can obtain employment, or does the bill cover merely those who have courage to go to the relief centre and sign their names and say they must go on relief.

[Mr. Rogers.]

Mr. ROGERS: If my hon. friend will read the subsection again he will find that employment on relief works to which the dominion government makes contribution is not restricted wholly to those who are on relief. The words themselves will correct that impression if it is in his mind:

... so far as it may be in the opinion of the governor in council practicable and consistent with reasonable efficiency and economy to do so, for the employment of persons who being available and competent are necessarily and properly in receipt of relief in the province in which such work or undertaking is to be performed.

In other words, employment on such projects is not to be confined exclusively to those who are on relief. That would be a very proper subject for the terms of the agreement with the provinces respecting relief works, but I know that in the past the clause has been elastic; it has never been intended to confine employment to those who were on relief.

Mr. MacNICOL: Then if a citizen in the class I have been alluding to desired to obtain employment on any of these works, what method would he follow to get employment?

Mr. ROGERS: Under some of the existing agreements, for instance respecting the construction of the trans-Canada highway, there is provision that those who are employed on that work shall be taken from the employment offices, and if such a person as my hon. friend has mentioned had registered at an employment office and were otherwise available and competent to do the work, I should see no reason why he would not be employed, provided there was opportunity.

Mr. MacNICOL: I thank the minister for his explanation.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: As hon. members know, the deputy of the governor general is to arrive at half past five to give assent to such bills as have passed both houses. I suggest in view of this fact that the committee rise, report progress on this bill and ask leave to sit again later to-day in order to enable us to take up some supplementary estimates which relate to the last fiscal year just ended. It would be embarrassing to some members of the public service if they were not passed in time to be assented to before parliament adjourns for the Easter recess. I hope it will be possible to dispose of them this afternoon.

Mr. BENNETT: Before the committee rises, the minister might look at section 2. He has provided that the act shall be administered by the Minister of Labour, but there is nothing