

farmers in this district who have 100, 200 and sometimes 300 acres of land which they are unable to cultivate because of the conditions now prevailing, whereas if this work were done this large area would be available for cultivation, with very beneficial results to this part of the country. To justify myself before this committee and before the electors of my riding, and especially those who attacked me, I will remind the committee that on the 21st of December, 1931, and the 21st of January, 1932, I made two identical requests to the Department of Labour under the relief act in answer to a circular sent to all members of this house asking what kind of public works they could suggest in their ridings that would be useful to the citizens and help the unemployed. In reply I mentioned many public works that might be done in my riding, and especially this dredging of the little Montreal river. On the 4th of February the Minister of Public Works answered me thus:

Dear Mr. Dupuis,—

Mr. Harry Hereford, Dominion Director of Unemployment Relief, has sent me copies of your letters under date of the 21st December and 21st January, with his replies thereto, respecting requests for works under the provisions of the Unemployment and Farm Relief Act, 1931, in Laprairie-Napierville.

When tentative lists were being made of works to be carried out directly by the federal government, we had to consider first the class of works which could be included in a limited program for each province and to confine these to harbour and river works and public buildings, according to established practice in the Department of Public Works. It was also necessary to take into consideration the most pressing situations resulting from dislocation in industry in the large centres of unemployment.

So far as the department is concerned apart from public buildings, works are confined in the main to the actual requirements of navigation, with due regard to seasonal conditions to effect construction. We could not undertake any extensive program of protection or drainage works. It was not intended that the federal government should carry out works which could be initiated by the provinces and the municipalities, except by contributing a certain percentage of the cost, if and when these works were grouped and submitted to the Department of Labour by the provinces and finally authorized by the federal government.

As you are aware, farm relief under the act was confined to the prairie provinces, and this matter was handled by the Minister of Agriculture.

I shall not read the whole letter, but I have read the paragraph which states that these works could not be done, and that under the Relief Act the provinces of Quebec or Ontario were not entitled to any appropriation. I do not want to criticize the government unduly because I believe they have enough difficulties without adding to them, but I felt bound to make this statement so

that the friends of hon. members to your right, sir, shall not in future attack me for having neglected their interests. Moreover, I believe that the hon. Minister of Public Works, for whom I have a very high regard because of his kindness and all the good qualities I am ready to recognize in him personally—

An hon. MEMBER: He is a nice fellow.

Mr. DUPUIS: I do not want to throw any flowers, but he deserves it. I hope that when the hon. minister replies, apart from what I say as to his personal qualities, but from the point of view of administration only, comparing this with what has been voted for other parts which I will not name, he will assure us that he will grant this small amount.

Mr. CASGRAIN: How much?

Mr. DUPUIS: It is \$2,000.

Mr. CASGRAIN: For a breakwater?

Mr. DUPUIS: No, to finish dredging the river to drain a large area of land in my riding.

Mr. NEILL: The flowers would be cheap at the price.

Mr. STEWART (Leeds): I might pay it myself.

Mr. DUPUIS: Some hon. member to my left says if it were \$400,000 it would be easier, but I do not believe it. I will wait until I have a favourable answer from the minister, and then I have another request to make.

Mr. STEWART (Leeds): If my hon. friend defers making his second request until he gets the promise, possibly he will not make the second request to-night. I have not before me the particulars of the work to which he refers, which was undertaken in the little Montreal river some years ago. It was an undertaking on the basis, I believe, of a contribution by the province of Quebec and possibly by the municipality interested in the scheme.

Mr. DUPUIS: Fifty per cent by Quebec and fifty per cent by Ottawa.

Mr. STEWART (Leeds): I am told that the portion of the work assigned to the Department of Public Works was fully carried out, and that what is now sought is some additional contribution to take care of the cost of the work that was to be done by the province or by the parties directly interested. From time to time my hon. friend has presented these claims, but the circumstances were such that we did not feel