

then revert to government notices of motion. That is what we intimated at the close of last evening's business we would do.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Calling the orders of the day first?

Mr. BENNETT: Of course.

UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. F. DONNELLY (Willow Bunch): I should like to ask a question of the Prime Minister or the Acting Minister of Labour. Are they now in a position to give an outline of their scheme for the relief of people in western Canada who are in great distress and want? I am moved to ask this question in view of the number of letters and telegrams which I am receiving daily from my district. I will read just one short telegram which I received this morning, giving some idea of the condition that exists in the west. This is from Rockglen, Saskatchewan, under date of June 29, and is addressed to me at the House of Commons, Ottawa:

Fifteen families from Coal Creek colony are starving and request your investigation. Letter and details following.

William Griffin, chairman,
Representatives Coal Creek colony.

I can read other letters showing that 98 per cent of the people in some of our municipalities are at the present time living on and taking relief from the municipalities and that the municipalities are to-day at the end of their resources and unable to furnish any kind of relief to these people. The conditions are appalling. It is absolutely necessary that something be done, and be done at once, if these people are to be kept from starving.

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Prime Minister): The hon. gentleman knows perhaps quite as well as any other hon. member of this house that the primary responsibility with respect to caring for the citizenry of a province who are without food rests with the municipal authorities and the province.

Mr. DONNELLY: The municipalities have no money.

Mr. BENNETT: Then have they made appeal to the province? For as has been very often pointed out and is generally recognized, the duty rests primarily with the municipalities and with the province, and not with this parliament of the dominion. We have said, and we propose to continue to say, to the province that if the situation is as acute as the hon. gentleman indicates we will cooperate with them in any effort that may be necessary to deal with the situation. I saw the premiers

of two of the western provinces the other day. They were here for a day. They went away and came back again, and I saw them again. They are taking, as is their duty, an inventory of the very situation which the hon. gentleman has mentioned. I too have received many communications, many more than my hon. friend has, with respect to that whole loss of crop for three successive years in a great portion of the province of Saskatchewan. Obviously any statement that I would make on behalf of the Dominion government would have to be made after the provinces had thoroughly canvassed the situation, and when they were aware of just what had to be done, and were in a position to state in what manner we might assist them, for it would be an intrusion into their affairs for the Dominion primarily to act in the situation. Not only would it be an intrusion, but one that might be resented, for already one of the provinces has stated that the government does not desire any assistance from the Dominion with respect to unemployment. This situation is not unemployment. It is far worse. It is a national calamity, in my judgment, if the information I receive is accurate, and to the extent that our services and assistance may be acceptable, within reasonable limitations, to the provinces affected, they will be available.

TARIFF BOARD

PROVISION FOR APPOINTMENT, POWERS, DUTIES AND SALARIES

The house resumed from Monday, June 29, consideration of the motion of the Right Hon. Mr. Bennett for the second reading of Bill No. 47, to provide for the appointment of a tariff board.

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, in availing myself of the opportunity which the rules afford to close the debate on the motion which I made a few days ago in moving the second reading of the bill for the appointment of a tariff board, I do so with a due sense of the fact that the house does not desire to hear me or anyone else at any great length on this measure after the very full discussion which has already taken place, but, as has been observed, it is a matter of first rate importance, and I submit that there has been on the part of my hon. friends opposite a very apparent desire not to understand the motives which have actuated us in the action which we are taking.

First, I may say that the question of motive cannot in any sense influence legislation. When I heard the right hon. gentleman