

## GOVERNMENT TO RELIEVE UNEMPLOYMENT

### Federal Labor Bureaus to Work in Co-operation with Those of Provinces

A general Governmental policy for handling unemployment is being discussed at a series of conferences held in Ottawa concurrently with the gathering of Dominion and Provincial Ministers. The unemployment conferences will be attended by officers of the various employment exchanges in each Province, and by officers of the two Federal employment exchanges now in process of formation. The Labor sub-committee of the Cabinet will be in touch with the proceedings throughout.

Among the subjects for determination are:

(1) Creation of advisory committees, representative of employers and employed, in all the principal centres.

(2) Preparation, as far as possible, of full lists of the various Dominion, Provincial and municipal public works proposed for the coming year.

(3) Adoption of a common basis of trade classification.

The scheme is the outcome of legislation passed last session. Provision was then made for an expenditure by the Dominion of \$50,000 in the first year, \$100,000 in the second, and \$150,000 in the third. The Dominion Government establishes the two Federal clearing houses—one for the West at Winnipeg; the other for the East at Ottawa. The Provincial Governments, with assistance from the Dominion, maintain their own employment exchanges and work in close co-operation with the two Federal exchanges. It is expected that when the scheme gets well under way additional expenditure will be required on the part of both Dominion and Provincial Governments.

The main idea of the scheme is to systematize employment. The Provincial exchanges, from information furnished by the Federal clearing houses, will be in a position to know exactly where any particular class of labor is required. Thus, it is hoped, an applicant for employment can learn where vacancies exist without unnecessary expenditure to himself.

For the present, the Cabinet Sub-committee on Labor, of which Senator Robertson is chairman, is acting as Central Advisory Committee. Bryce M. Stewart, editor of The Labor Gazette, is in charge of the work of organizing the Federal bureaus.

## SEED GRAIN LOANS FROM COMPANIES

Special legislation will be enacted at the coming session of the Saskatchewan Legislature to enable the loan companies to make advances for seed grain to their borrowers, it was announced on November 19th by Hon. George Langley, Minister of Municipal Affairs, and a measure of control will probably be retained by the Government respecting the rate of interest which may be charged by the companies in regard to the additional advance made necessary by financing the mortgagees with seed grain.

The decision of the mortgage companies to finance their own creditors was communicated to the Government recently, following a conference some weeks ago between loan company representatives and the Government. It is estimated that the decision of the loan companies means that 76 per cent. of the seed requirements of needy farmers in the Province will be met in this way.

## WORK OF PRESS IN LOAN CAMPAIGN

Sir Thomas White, Canadian Minister of Finance, has written the following letter to the Canadian Press Association, in appreciation of the efforts of the press in the loan campaign: To the Publishers and Editors of the Press of Canada:

I desire personally and on behalf of the Government to express our most earnest thanks to the press of Canada for the splendid support given so freely and generously to the Victory Loan. This fine patriotic service is the more deeply appreciated by reason of knowledge of the many difficulties which have been imposed upon the press by war conditions and of the disorganization of staff in so many parts of the Dominion owing to the prevailing epidemic. I feel that the success of the Loan will be in large measure attributable to the invaluable assistance of the press.

W. T. WHITE.

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## MERCHANTS' BANK REPORT

The financial statement of the Merchants' Bank of Canada for the half-year period ending October 31st last, issued from the bank's headquarters at Montreal on November 18th, shows some remarkable gains. Total assets amount to \$165,924,436, an increase of \$35,355,783 over the corresponding date last year. Of this total the readily available portion amounts to \$72,448,217, being an increase of \$16,933,191, showing that the liquid position of the bank is being well maintained. An interesting feature of the gain in readily available assets is the increase of \$13,913,837 under the headings of securities of the Dominion and Provincial Governments and of Canadian municipalities and British, foreign and colonial governments, an increase which indicates that a full measure of assistance has been extended to the Canadian and Imperial authorities in the important matter of war finance. Deposits amount to \$126,941,581, against \$91,357,619 on October 31st, 1917, being an increase for the period of \$35,583,962, or more than 36 per cent., with the whole of the increase in deposits bearing interest. Deposits not bearing interest remain at practically last year's figures.

On Tuesday, November 19th, Mr. Edwin B. Parker, Priorities Commissioner in the United States, announced that the entire preference list had been discarded by the War Industries Board.