

Dominion-Provincial Relations

not suggesting for a moment that this move on the part of the government can be categorized as a mere vote-catching measure. I would suggest, however, that I doubt if Mr. Bennett is going to vote Conservative this time. After all, this measure is not going to affect the lives of more than a few Canadian people, in fact only the 10 provincial premiers. There are only 10 votes involved, so I doubt that that is its purpose.

When the minister introduced this measure this morning it was referred to as the Federal-Provincial Tax-Sharing Arrangements Act; or has the name now been changed, because I noticed that he mentioned the dominion-provincial tax-sharing arrangement act? However, the minister left no doubt in our minds that the rose, by whatever name it is going to be called in the future, should smell very sweet in the nostrils of the Canadian people. He told us it was a very important measure. He suggested it was important because it would enable the provinces, for one thing, to cope with the problem of unemployment.

I was very pleased to find that the minister had, for the time being, laid aside his rose-coloured glasses and had actually been able to see that there was an unemployment problem existing. I cannot forbear pointing out, Mr. Speaker, that surely if what he has been urging on us this morning is true, then his mention of unemployment on the floor of this parliament will increase the problem this measure is supposed to help. I am glad he recognized it, however, and took off his rose-coloured glasses.

I think we have to regard this measure as somewhat in the form of an instalment of a serial budget. There are advantages in this rather peculiar way of presenting a budget in instalments. After all, the reader's interest is kept at a fever pitch all the way through. Undoubtedly, like the readers of serials in magazines, the reader, as he reads this part, will be saying to himself, "What will Donald do next week?"

Mr. Fleming: We would both like to know.

Mr. Cameron: Indeed we would. The minister told us this is a very important measure which is going to solve the economic problems of the provinces and enable them to fulfil their constitutional functions. According to the latest estimate it will cost about \$87 million. The statisticians of the dominion bureau of statistics for whose competence with arithmetic I have great respect, tell us that by next March the number of those unemployed and seeking work will reach a million. I find that even the minister and I can do that simple piece of arithmetic. We can divide 1 million into 87 million quite easily, and we come up with \$87. We can see all

[Mr. Cameron.]

the wolves at the doors of the unemployed shuddering back in fright at this flaming sword in the hands of the Minister of Finance.

Admittedly, Mr. Speaker, it is an improvement on the record of the unlamented Liberal government, a slight improvement. At least this government has taken one hesitating step. I suppose, because it is an improvement on the sorry record of the previous administration, our Liberal friends have been spending their time chiding the minister for his faulty arithmetic. In my opinion it is a much more serious problem that is involved than that the minister is no better than I in the matter of arithmetic.

I want to go back again to my own province of British Columbia. I want to ask the minister if he is seriously trying to tell us that an additional \$2,800,000, I think the latest estimate was, is going to solve the serious problems that are now on the doorstep of the unfortunate Social Credit government of British Columbia. Of course Mr. Bennett may be able to use this \$2,800,000 to pay the statutory school grants he gypped the school boards out of in November because he said he had no money. Even if he is able to do that these school districts will still be left with the serious plight that confronts them, and has confronted them for some years, a plight that is giving serious concern to every informed educationist not only in British Columbia but throughout the country. I suggest that the minister should hesitate to imagine that this \$2,800,000 is going to solve even that problem, let alone the problem of unemployment, or is in fact going to make any material difference at all to the province of British Columbia.

I am asking these things, Mr. Speaker, because the minister presented this measure in precisely that light. He impressed upon this house the fact that this is a very serious measure, a very important measure; that it presumably is going to have a very serious and important effect upon the economy of Canada. I believe there must be a lot of people who are wondering if the minister has been signing cheques without entering the amounts on the stubs. A lot of people may be wondering whether or not he has been paying enough attention to the bank account before he signs the cheques, and may wonder whether or not some of them may come back marked N.S.F. Even if they do, I would submit that he is making an attempt, which is more than his predecessors in office did.

But we have had no word from him concerning any possibility that he is prepared to see that the bank account keeps pace with the cheques he is issuing. I am not going to repeat the figures I put on record