

in the guarantee of the sixty million dollar loan to the Canadian Pacific Railway. While I do not wish to be misunderstood or for it to be said that I am opposing these guarantees, I do want it to be distinctly understood that I am opposing the method by which these guarantees were given. The guarantees were given under the provisions of the Unemployment Relief Act which everyone in this house assumed was for the purpose of granting relief to distressed Canadians. Perhaps those institutions come within that category. I say, Mr. Speaker, that we on this side of the house are opposed to every action of that kind being taken under an unemployment relief measure. We do not say what our action would be if these matters were placed before us, although I for one would have opposed many of them. But I do say that the method of pledging the credit of the people of Canada for such huge amounts as was done under the Unemployment Relief Act should be opposed as strenuously as possible.

The older members of this parliament have some appreciation of the rights of parliament and of the long struggle to obtain them. I for one view with considerable alarm what I see happening all around me these days. I have some appreciation of the battle which the citizens of this and other countries fought for political and individual freedom. But now we have a severe depression and everybody is worried, not only the unemployed, but as I heard stated the other day, many of those engaged in industry from one end of this country to the other because they do not know what next week will bring forth with respect to their particular business. They are in a frame of mind to submit under the present conditions to very drastic action, and I say that this government is taking absolute and full advantage of the state of mind that prevails in this country because they have a very considerable majority in this house.

Mr. CANTLEY: That is not a fair statement.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): That is the statement I am going to make.

Mr. CANTLEY: I know you are going to make it, but that does not make it fair.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I say it is perfectly fair. Under other conditions I say that the people of this country would not stand for these acts being done. We had one example of the feeling of this country in 1926 when large powers were taken by a majority of this house and exercised by the executive in a manner nothing like so important as this. The people of this country spoke in a very emphatic way upon that

occasion when our rights, even in a smaller degree, were attempted to be taken from us. But to-day under this legislation, under the aegis of peace, order and good government this government can do anything. They have all the powers of this parliament conferred upon them, and despite what the Prime Minister said a few evenings ago when he amended section 2 (b) of this act, the executive still have unlimited power conferred upon them under this section. So much for the provision with respect to peace, order and good government.

I turn now to the blank cheque provision. Having been given the right to do anything that parliament has power to do the government are still asking to-day, after four years of experience in administering unemployment relief, that they retain the power, except that the right to deal with private corporations has been deleted from this particular bill, to spend money just as they please. It is all right for hon. gentlemen opposite to say that no case of maladministration can be pointed to, and I am very glad that we cannot. Indeed, if power were taken for that purpose it would be a tragedy. But there is always the temptation when the power exists, and unlimited power is being sought in this bill. Why, Mr. Speaker, the constitution itself is there not only for the protection of the individual but for the protection of the executive itself, and the executive now desires to take away the background of protection which they have in connection with their administrative powers. Under our constitution the executive have no right to spend a single dollar unless it has first been granted to them by parliament in specified amounts, and yet they disregard completely this right which parliament enjoys under our constitution, and which was dearly bought, and I say, Mr. Speaker, that it could not be done were it not for the desperate situation that now exists in this country.

Mr. CANTLEY: It would not have been necessary but for that situation.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Possibly not, but I fail to see the necessity for such drastic powers being taken even in the present difficult situation of this country. If the government had continued to come to parliament for a stated sum of money, as they asked for twenty million dollars at the special session in 1930, no one could have had very much criticism to offer, nor was there much criticism offered on that occasion. The government had complete control of the expenditure. True they did not give us details of the expenditure, and since that time up to the