

having slipped out of a certain country with a few more dollars of his own than the government of that country would permit him to have. He may, however, get away and reach British territory. If he is sent back, simply because he is guilty of being on relief, he may face a firing squad or a concentration camp or, more plainly, simply murder—because there is no question that murder has been encouraged, in large numbers, in some of the states to which I have referred.

I maintain it is inconsistent with the traditions of the British empire that a man who comes to this country shall not have freedom from political offences in the country from which he came. Certainly he should not be deported simply because he was on relief for a little while. We speak of everyone being free in a British country. May I point out that the bill only suggests—it does not compel—that in a case where a man's only crime is that of being on relief, and where his being sent home to his country of origin would almost inevitably mean the forfeiture of his liberty and property, and quite possibly his life, such matters should be taken into consideration, and if circumstances warrant he should not be deported. The bill excludes extraditable offences, or any offences which would be a crime in this country, and it leaves ample opportunity to take the very fullest means to get rid of the really undesirable or prohibited immigrants.

The effect of it would be that the board, and the government, will not be compelled as they are now to deport people whose only crime may be that they desire that liberty of thought and speech and action which is so dear to all of us in the British empire.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

UNEMPLOYMENT

TELEGRAM FROM MINERS AT PASSCHENDAELE, N.S.,
AS TO NEED OF RELIEF

On the orders of the day:

Hon. R. J. MANION (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, before the orders of the day are proceeded with I should like to draw the attention of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Rogers) to a telegram I have received, and which I presume he or some other members of the government have received, indicating a condition so serious and critical that I believe it is deserving of a statement from the minister.

The telegram is from Passchendaele, Nova Scotia, via Glace Bay, and is as follows:

Miners and their families of this town in dire need of relief or more work. Mines only working two shifts. People are desperate. More work is not possible during winter. Immediate relief is necessary or men will be forced to take direct action as they cannot see families go hungry any longer.

That is all of the telegram which deals with the matter. It is signed by Michael Nearing, local union 4519, of the United Mine Workers. While I had not informed the minister I was going to ask the question, I have taken it for granted that he received a wire respecting the matter. If he has not, I shall be quite content to receive his answer to-morrow, if he prefers.

Hon. NORMAN McL. ROGERS (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, a few minutes before the house opened I had received notice from the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth) of his intention to ask a question based upon a telegram similar to that just read by the leader of the opposition (Mr. Manion). My information is that the condition referred to has been brought to the attention of the provincial government, which has always assumed the responsibility of allocating both federal and provincial funds available for distribution in connection with direct relief.

Mr. MANION: In regard to the message which I read, do I take it that the minister completely shelves responsibility? Does he assume it to be the responsibility wholly of the provincial government? Has he communicated with the provincial government in regard to it?

Mr. ROGERS: With respect to the latter part of my hon. friend's question, I may say that immediately upon receipt of a telegram similar to the one he received the matter was brought to the attention of the provincial government. As he is aware, the provincial government under both the previous and the present administration, has been charged with the responsibility of deciding where and under what conditions direct relief shall be given. The dominion government makes monthly grants in aid to the provinces for that purpose.

Mr. MANION: Is it not so that a number of exceptions to that have been made by this government?

Mr. ROGERS: Such supplementary agreements with respect to works for the provision of employment as have been made have been brought to the attention of the house, either by the *Canada Gazette* or by the actual tabling of the agreements.