

Unemployment—Agreements with Provinces

to that part of northern Ontario north of lake Superior where there are rocky districts, and I said that the blasting of those rocks would be useless. I did not refer to the farming lands or the settlements in northern Ontario, and I did not speak about the highways leading to the mines. Those highways are not for passenger cars, but for heavy trucks so that ore may be carried from the mines. We know that highways through farming districts are essential; they are the arteries of trade. I know that. I know, too, that railways are other arteries of trade. I do not for one moment wish to prevent the development of northern Ontario; as a Canadian I believe I represent not only my constituency but Canada as a whole. By way of contrast, however, my hon. friend represents only himself, particularly when he misconstrues statements made by hon. members in this committee.

I shall say no more; that is my last word. Were I to speak longer in this connection I would honour too much the hon. member who has spoken. The time has now come to treat him with contempt and silence.

Mr. BROWN: Mr. Chairman, in the course of the discussion the question of putting men on the land has been considered. Hon. members are not yet very clear as to the attitude of the government. On a former occasion the minister seemed to indicate that the government did not intend to cooperate with the provinces or to enter upon any scheme themselves of putting men back upon the land. More recently it would seem that the government at least in some degree has changed its mind, and that there is a possibility of some such work being undertaken. If such a policy is in contemplation it ought to be undertaken with the greatest care. Any attempt to enter upon anything as elaborate as the soldier settlement scheme would from the beginning be doomed to failure.

Much has been said about putting men back on the land, by people who evidently know very little about conditions confronting those actually on the land. Many statements have been made which would not for one moment bear investigation, and indicate an entire lack of information. For instance, we heard the statement a few days ago that the farmer would at least have his butter and eggs. The hon. member was evidently under the impression that butter and eggs could be picked off trees. The minister has given the figure of \$600 as a sum which might possibly be advanced to men desiring to take up farming. I would say that \$600 would be only a flea bite when compared with what is neces-

[Mr. Pouliot.]

sary properly to establish a man on a farm in the west. True, there is a possibility that if a very careful selection were made of the men to go on the land something might be done in establishing some of them on bush farms in northern Ontario. If those men were willing to face many years of privation and hardship as did our forefathers in Ontario and Quebec seventy-five or one hundred years ago, there would be some possibility of their making a reasonable success. Unfortunately, however, to-day there are very few men possessed of the temperament and the willingness to face years of pioneering in the woods. In any policy which may be advocated to place men back upon the land, that fact must be taken into consideration. I do not say that something could not be done in that direction, but I wish to emphasize that any policy along that line must be undertaken with great care, and that any elaborate policy would from the outset be doomed to failure.

I noticed that the International Harvester Company of Chicago, using road tractors and piougnis, were ploughing up a large area of land around the city of Chicago, with a view to dividing it into quarter-acre lots to be cultivated by the unemployed. In war time some such scheme was undertaken in and around the city of Winnipeg; men were encouraged to cultivate garden lots. Unfortunately, however, the time is rapidly approaching when such a scheme would be impracticable for this year, because the seed would have to be in the ground within the next month. That policy might have met with a large degree of success. Men and women living in Winnipeg or in any of the cities of eastern Canada could have been given an opportunity to cultivate some of the adjoining vacant lots. But the time for such a program is almost if not completely passed.

It seems perfectly evident from all the information we can gather that we are rapidly approaching the time when to a very much greater extent than in the past we will be required to give direct relief. Certainly it is true that the provinces and the municipalities cannot longer cooperate with the federal government as they have done in carrying on relief works. The municipalities in particular are at the point where, not being able to collect their taxes, they will not be able to contribute further money to the carrying on of works not absolutely and immediately needed. But facing, as I think we are compelled to face, this question of giving direct relief, I want to bring to the notice of the house a matter that has been of interest to me for some months past.