

*Unemployment Insurance*

by way of the dole. That is too serious a contingency to contemplate. I wish to bring before the house the situation existing in my own city as typical more or less of what prevails in a great many places.

I have before me a statement of a survey of unemployment conditions in Winnipeg and in greater Winnipeg. This is signed by H. B. Shaw, chairman of the Winnipeg citizens committee on unemployment; by Ralph Maybank, chairman of the joint unemployment committee of the city of Winnipeg; and by A. Mac-Namara, assistant deputy minister, administrator of unemployment relief in Manitoba. It is dated April 10, 1931. Mr. H. B. Shaw is a former banker and is chairman of the mayor's committee, as it is known, in Winnipeg. This memorandum gives a statement of applications received for direct relief in the following places: Winnipeg, St. Boniface, Brooklands, Fort Garry, East Kildonan, North Kildonan, West Kildonan, St. James, Transcona, Charleswood, and St. Vital. These municipalities are essentially urban in character. The single men number 8,307, the married men 5,398, the single women 458, the total units 14,163, and the total persons represented, taking families into account, 35,968.

The statement adds:

This shows those who applied for relief. For various reasons, in about half the cases no relief was given. There is no doubt, however, that the men and women applying were badly in need of work.

I am merely giving the headings, but I have in the memorandum the whole situation set out in tabular detail. Next there appears a statement of persons and families given direct relief during March, 1931, in the same municipalities: single men, 3,849; married men, 3,150; single women, 115; total units, 7,114; and total persons including children, 31,799. Further than that, the total unemployed in greater Winnipeg, according to this survey, are: men, 16,394, and women, 2,499, or a total of 18,893. And with families added it amounts to 56,682 persons. This statement goes on to discuss the prospects for the future, the jobs which will be started as soon as weather permits. It reads:

The jobs which are in sight are very few and consist, to a large extent, of government work, and are outlined hereunder.

Then follow several of the schemes which have been proposed by the federal government and concurred in by the provinces and municipalities. In Winnipeg itself and in these municipalities mentioned they will take

[Mr. Woodsworth.]

care of 950 persons. The statement goes on, with regard to conditions in the country and the possibilities of securing employment:

The Winnipeg Citizens Committee on Unemployment, under the chairmanship of Mr. H. B. Shaw, addressed a letter to prominent persons at country points, inquiring as to the possibility of absorbing in agricultural pursuits the surplus labour in Winnipeg. Replies received were very pessimistic, and were generally to the effect that farmers would not be hiring men this season because of the general depression in the agricultural field, that farmers were satisfied that they would be unable to pay the wages of any men employed, and consequently that any crops put in would be put in by the farmer and his family.

These replies from country points are substantiated by the fact that applications to the employment office for farm workers during the last six weeks have totalled less than one-half of what they were last year during the same period, in spite of the fact that there is every prospect of a much earlier spring.

#### Railways

The vice-presidents of the two railways advise the committee that there will be no increase on their roads of employment during the coming summer, and that during the winter 1931-32 there will be a curtailment, in all probability, the explanation being given that betterments had been pretty well taken care of, and that there would be very little work of this nature going on.

#### Bush Work

In a normal season there are from eight to ten thousand men taken out of the labour market in Winnipeg by firms operating lumber camps in northern Ontario, eastern Manitoba and northern Manitoba. Last winter there were fewer than eight hundred men employed for this purpose, only part of which number were taken from Winnipeg.

The committee has written a letter to every lumber firm that ordinarily operates in this vicinity, inquiring as to the employment prospects for the winter 1931-32, and the replies received would indicate that fewer men will be employed during the coming winter than were employed during the past winter. In other words, instead of eight or ten thousand men, it may be expected that there will be fewer than eight hundred taken from Winnipeg's surplus labour market.

We are told that there are at the present time 16,394 men, and according to the prospects indicated by this committee, there will be only 1,700 men required. This leaves a balance of about 14,700 not taken care of this spring. What is to be done with this large volume of unemployment? We have been helping men by means of what is rightly called the dole. That is to say, certain amounts have been simply given out by charities and by authorities of various kinds and these amounts have been supplemented by grants from the government. I contend that this is a most haphazard and demoralizing way