

Mr. GORDON: I know nothing of it.

Mr. BRADETTE: I do know something of it, but I do not believe it would help this measure to bring the matter up here. I wish to go to the root of the question, to the moral of it. It is not necessary to bring up local matters which would not be at all beneficial to the bill or the problem before us. The point I want to make is that work is preferable under all conditions and circumstances to direct relief.

Mr. GORDON: Premier Taschereau does not think so, having regard to the expense.

Mr. BRADETTE: I do not know what he thinks about it, but I saw this article in yesterday's Montreal Gazette under the heading, "Hon. J. N. Francoeur deals with relief. Hope expressed Ottawa would forego direct aid in favour of public works":

Hope that the Dominion government would adopt public works and forego direct relief as a means of lessening unemployment was voiced in the Quebec legislative assembly to-day by Hon. J. N. Francoeur, Minister of Public Works, when he continued the budget debate.

Relief of unemployment by providing jobs was a better method than by providing clothes and shelter, Mr. Francoeur stated and he hoped the Dominion government would soon take that view of the matter as it would be better for the jobless themselves and brighten the general situation.

These words were uttered the day before yesterday in the Quebec legislative assembly, so if I have to take the word of the minister there can be no peace in the Quebec cabinet, because the Minister of Public Works for the province says that it would be better to provide work than direct relief. He must have been voicing the sentiments of the premier of the province of Quebec. I repeat what I said a few moments ago, that the people of Canada to-day want work and not charity.

There is one anomaly up in my section which I believe at this time should be mentioned. When the scrip system was inaugurated, which is the only practical one under present conditions, a man received a scrip carrying with it a guarantee by the provincial government to the effect that he was entitled to receive provisions at a store. The man was left to his own initiative to buy the goods where he could get them at the best price, which was the best system. But for that scrip he was supposed to work. I maintain that when a man works either at manual labour, at professional or clerical work he should be paid in Canadian dollars and not by scrip. If a man received \$10 he was compelled to work five days on road construction at \$2 a day.

At the end of the five days they would receive not Canadian currency but scrip, which was good in itself, but to some extent limited. The holders could buy only certain lines of goods, commodities necessary for the sustenance of life. There was no provision for medicines and various other things of that type. The people who held the scrip, although they had done manual labour, were compelled to buy the goods stipulated by the government. I contend, after making a thorough inquiry, that if a man is compelled to do work for consideration he receives from the government, he should be paid in Canadian currency.

There is another matter which no doubt the Minister of Labour will remedy as soon as possible. Perhaps he is not aware of it, and I should like him to understand that my statements are not made in a spirit of criticism.

Mr. GORDON: I am quite aware of the situation; it obtains just the same in the province of Quebec, and I have no control over it whatever. The hon. member knows that, I am sure.

Mr. BRADETTE: I want to be fair; I want to bring these matters to his attention, because I know that through the bill to be introduced and by the powers given by this House of Commons he will have charge of direct relief. Surely the Minister of Labour must have some great power in dealing with these matters when in some instances he is paying 50 per cent and in other instances 33½ per cent for direct relief. The point I wish to bring to the minister's attention—and I know he will deal fairly with this—is the fact that to-day the retailer has to pay cash for his goods. Throughout the country when retailers receive scrip they are called upon to give goods for the amount appearing on the order. I do not wish the minister to think I am criticizing, but I am suggesting that there should be a remedy for a condition which is detrimental to the retail trade in general. Some of the scrip has not been paid, although the goods have been delivered for over three months. I believe that condition is not fair to the retailer. Probably it is only a matter of delay, but to the small man these delays are very important. In this House of Commons we hear a great deal about the farmers' problems and the problems of the working man, but we very seldom hear anything about the retailers. I believe they constitute a part of our population which during times of stress and depression have given great help in advancing goods. I have no