

the relief of unemployment. As a representative of labour for many years, I am glad indeed that the members of this House and those in another place are giving to the all-important question of unemployment the consideration that it deserves, although I think a great mistake is being made in the way the problem is being dealt with at this time. In my judgment the proposal before us will stultify ambition.

An honourable SENATOR: Oh!

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: An honourable gentleman says "Oh," but he should not forget that I have rambled through the high-ways and byways and know something about labour, organized and unorganized. I say it will stultify ambition and prostitute resourcefulness on the part of many workers.

I realize that there is much unemployment in Canada, but it is nothing in comparison with what exists on the other side of the line. Some honourable members may ask how I know that. Well, I happen to be working for an organization with 187,000 members, 23,000 of whom, in the United States, are to-day not able to hold a position even on the "extra" board. So it is with my honourable friend's organization and with others. Therefore I think that very much more has been made of this question of unemployment than was really necessary. I realize that it is necessary to deal with this measure, as we are doing, but I think it was a great mistake to spread throughout Canada such statements as were made some weeks ago.

My honourable friend will not give me credit for reading what he said, but I have done so. I have been associated with him for many years in different interests and have considerable respect for what he says, but I should like to ask him this question.

Hon. Mr. LAIRD: Read what he says on page 23 of Hansard.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: On September 10 my honourable friend, taking great and proper pride in Sir Robert Borden's part in helping to formulate the Treaty of Versailles, placed on Hansard, for the benefit of us all—and he has my thanks for so doing—a statement of certain principles adopted under that treaty. I want to read two paragraphs quoted by my honourable friend, which appeared on page 25 of Hansard:

Third.—The payment to the employed of a wage adequate to maintain a reasonable standard of life as this is understood in their time and country.

Fourth.—The adoption of an eight-hours day or a forty-eight hours week as the standard to be aimed at where it has not already been attained.

The question I should like to ask my honourable friend I have already put to him personally, but I have not been at all satisfied with his answer. The question is, whether it is the intention, in the expenditure of this \$20,000,000 of federal funds, to recognize the fair wages policy of the Federal Government.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: I thank my honourable friend for having brought forward this inquiry, because it enables one to deal with what has been a doubt in the minds of some, to judge by the amendment to this Bill that was moved in another place. I listened with some interest to honourable members who brought forward that amendment in another place, and I believe that in doing so they were absolutely sincere in the desire to serve the working people of Canada, but they overlooked the fact that there is already on the Statute Book of Canada, in chapter 20 of the Statutes of 1930, a law which deals with this question; also that P.C. 670, of March last, dealt with the question of the eight hour day.

The Prime Minister of Canada in 1919 attached his signature to the document to which I referred a week ago, and that pledge has been carried out as far as it was possible under our constitution for the federal authorities to carry it out. My honourable friend and other gentlemen know that it is not within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government to say that the eight hour day shall prevail in all industries, or that fair wage clauses shall be inserted in every contract where municipalities or provinces are concerned. The Federal Parliament can only deal with such matters as are within its powers. It was therefore made clear in another place when the amendment was under consideration that the Government would not accept it.

I may say to honourable members that it is the intention, so far as the Federal Government is concerned, to respect those obligations that are already law. When the Federal Government comes to discuss an agreement to carry on certain work, and its cost, it is intended to have the province and the municipality agree that in consideration of receiving assistance from the federal treasury they shall observe the fair wages resolution and the eight hour day. The agreement thus made will have some effect so far as the provinces and municipalities are concerned, whereas the amendment suggested in another place could not possibly have that effect.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: Is that a promise?

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: I assure my honourable friend that that is the intention of the Minister of Labour, under whose jurisdic-