

Further, I find the following in an order in council passed on January 25, 1922:

The present administration, assuming office at the close of the year 1921, finds that a condition of unemployment beginning in the late months of 1920 and continuing throughout the year 1921 does not promise any material abatement during the early winter months of 1922.

Consideration has been given to the means which would seem best adapted to the relief of the distress resulting from severe unemployment conditions, and the provisions to this end of P.C. 3831 have been carefully noted.

The minister concurs in the view that the question of unemployment relief is fundamentally a municipal and provincial responsibility; that the abnormal economic and industrial conditions now existing and arising in a measure out of the late war alone afford justification for action on the part of the federal authorities; that federal action must therefore supplement municipal and provincial efforts—

I repeat the words "must supplement"—

—must be designed on lines permitting close and effective cooperation with and supervision by municipal and provincial authorities, and must be proportioned by the efforts of those authorities.

That was the declaration made by the right hon. gentleman in the order in council P.C. 191, dated January 25, 1922, and I say to him that it is not correct now any more than it would have been correct then to say that the relief that is being given in municipalities by provinces themselves or the relief carried on by the municipalities is federal relief, because it is not. The federal government by grants in aid is assisting the provinces to carry on their constitutional obligations, just as in 1922 the right hon. gentleman in that order in council declared that to be so. So when you refer to direct relief or to doles in this country I should like this house at the very threshold of the session to understand that in no sense was that ever imposed by the federal government on the provinces.

The provinces met together in 1931 with the federal government and said that the only method by which they could continue to discharge their duties was through direct relief. They said the same in 1932. They met again here in 1933, and again the other day. In 1933 they suggested that something might be done further with respect to public works and undertakings with the assistance of the federal power. In 1934 they said the same thing.

With respect to commissions they claimed, the larger provinces in particular, that they were not prepared to hand over the conduct of their provincial and local affairs to any federal commission that we might set up; that they themselves were masters in their

own house and would discharge their own constitutional duties, and they sought and obtained from us assistance based on the actual necessities of the situation. All the provinces have received assistance, not the western provinces alone, but the rich great provinces of the central part of Canada, Quebec and Ontario, have also demanded their share on the same basis as the others and have received it; and they have assumed responsibility for administration. We have told them, and I am repeating what I said to them the other day, that in some instances we are not satisfied with their administration. We told them that we intended to impose conditions on grants being given unless there was evidence of better administration. That we have a right to do, and I think you will agree that it should be done. The same conditions that in a smaller way confronted the government of the day in 1922 confronted this government when in an effort to relieve the situation by means of public works and undertakings—to which I shall presently refer, for they also are dealt with in the same order in council—we asked the municipalities and the provinces to give their assistance, as they did. At page 2 of the order in council which I have just read, the then government of the day set out the conditions under which it proposed to give assistance for the purpose of enabling necessary works to be constructed, even at a higher cost. We have believed that it was not wise or provident to spend moneys on public works under conditions where the cost would be out of all proportion to the results obtained during the winter season.

The camps that have been set up under the Department of National Defence and providing food and clothing and shelter and twenty cents per day for fifteen thousand people or more brought the warmest encomiums upon their administration from the premier of Quebec. Without divulging anything that took place at the conference, I may say that he made that abundantly clear both publicly and privately, and the same might be said of the camps carried on by the Parks branch.

With respect to other undertakings carried on by the provinces to which federal assistance is given, it is of course difficult in the three prairie provinces to provide public works and undertakings in a season like this. When the right hon. gentleman says that the government must submit in broad and general outline, and perhaps in detail, what it proposes to do, I can assure him that that is exactly what is intended to be done, because