

in that area to heat the greater part of the cities of Calgary, Regina and Winnipeg. I realize the piping of this gas for such long distances would be an expensive proposition and perhaps of doubtful business value from the point of view of the initial cost, but we are living in a day when money is being spent to keep men in idleness or to give them work on various relief projects which are of doubtful value. Has the minister given consideration to such a proposition as I have outlined as a relief project? This project would provide work for both skilled and unskilled labour. It may be entirely removed from the realm of possibility or feasibility, and I am only asking the minister if any consideration has been given to the matter.

Mr. ROGERS: I do not recall that this particular proposal has come to the department. I must say that I am not competent to pass upon the engineering feasibility of the scheme. I agree with my hon. friend that where possible we should see that expenditures are made in a direction that will lead to collateral and additional ultimate employment. Any proposal of that kind which is referred to us we consider most carefully. Where we have not the engineering staff in our own department to consider the matter, we refer it to other departments which have the requisite staff.

Mr. MASSEY: This is not a matter limited only to the province of Alberta. There is sufficient heat being wasted in the Turner Valley to burn up the city of Calgary overnight. The service could be extended to Regina and Winnipeg, thus becoming an inter-provincial proposition in which the federal government could well interest itself.

Mr. COLDWELL: Several years ago a private corporation did submit a plan which was found to be quite feasible from the engineering point of view. It was from the economic point of view that the feasibility was doubtful. The amount involved to pipe the gas from Turner Valley to Saskatoon and to Regina by a triangular route was approximately \$18,000,000. An alternative proposition to pipe the gas to Regina from the Turner Valley field, touching on the way Swift Current and several other cities, amounted to some \$14,000,000; and there was actually a scheme voted upon in the city of Regina several years ago to bring in gas from the Bowdoin field in Montana at a cost of about \$11,000,000. These estimated prices were in boom times, and I happen to know that early in the depression—I think it was in 1933 or 1934, anyhow shortly after I left the council at Regina—a scheme exactly

[Mr. Massey.]

like the previous one to bring gas from the Bowdoin field to Regina was discussed. It was to cost about \$6,750,000, or about half the cost of the original Calgary-Regina scheme.

I believe there is a great deal to be said for the suggestion of the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Massey) as a conservation measure and for the utilization of something which I, at least, regard as a criminal waste. No doubt the minister has been in the Turner valley, and I am sure he would agree with me that probably it represents one of the world's greatest wastages. Billions of cubic feet of gas, after the naphtha has been removed, sufficient for almost all the heating and lighting needs of the prairie provinces, are going to waste every day. As an unemployment measure consideration might be given to the proposal. I realize however, that in respect of such schemes the cost of material is a factor, and the outlay for piping would be a fairly large percentage of the total. But I believe that if geologists can assure the government that there is a fair supply of gas for the future—as to which, I may say, doubt has been expressed from time to time—the enterprise might be remunerative, would conserve a great resource, would utilize something which to-day is a great waste, and probably give a tremendous service to the people of western Canada. As I have said, it is an engineering possibility, but whether it is economically practicable or economically desirable is another matter on which I cannot pass an opinion.

Mr. LANDERYOU: Has the minister received any suggested plans from the provinces in connection with the utilization of this gas?

Mr. ROGERS: I stated a moment ago that I have not received a definite proposal in this matter from any province. It may be, as was suggested by the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggan (Mr. Coldwell), that some years ago a proposal was sent to the Department of Labour here. I can only say I have no knowledge of it. I surmise that some question might arise as to the effect of such an undertaking on the coal mines of Alberta.

Mr. CHURCH: A most dangerous principle is involved in this vote. I do not see why any one municipality should be allowed to balance its budget with federal aid. For example, the city I referred to, one of whose members is the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Massey) has had to provide a vast general Greater Toronto sewage system not only for the city but for many incorporated villages, towns and townships within a radius of miles. It has been found necessary to put in a slow sand water filtration plant. Now