

be helped. I have said what I think of that absurd scheme of the trans-Canada highway. It serves no useful purpose, and if it was not intended to compete with the railways and drag something out of their present small earnings, it must certainly have that effect.

The session is about to close, Mr. Chairman, and I think before we prorogue we should have some information as to the number of unemployed in this country. I would ask the government to make an inventory and classification of the unemployed. That is essential for my hon. friend from East Algoma as well as for members from Ontario, Quebec, the west and the maritime provinces, if we are to decide anything intelligently about the unemployment situation. The measure before us is a measure for the relief of the unemployment situation. Several times this session I have urged upon the government the importance of making an inventory or classification of the unemployed, giving the story of each. It requires courage to do that, but if it is done the government may rest assured that I for one, so far from criticizing them for doing that work, will congratulate every member of the government. This work should have been done in August, 1930. In August, 1930, there was a sub-committee studying the unemployment problem, and that committee made certain recommendations, some of which were followed and others not. I think it was an excellent idea to have the leaders of industry and of labour meeting together in that way, to try to ascertain the source of the trouble with a view to seeing if it could not be remedied. To-day we do not know the number of unemployed in this country. We do not know how many clerks are idle, how many labourers, how many tradesmen, how many commercial travellers, how many railway employees, how many farm workers, and so forth, and until the whole story is known in detail how can the government with a plaster of subsidies cure the situation. Without such information it is impossible for the government to do so, because it does not know what is the source of the trouble. I am not making these remarks, Mr. Chairman, in any petty, partisan spirit. I am afraid of the future if the government has not the courage to do now what it should have done two years ago; in fact, to continue the work which it stopped in August, 1930. The government should not be afraid to go down to the root of the social evil in order to ascertain the real causes of the problem of unemployment, and if possible find a cure. May I ask the minister if he will be kind enough to con-

sider that suggestion and to continue the work which was being done in August or September, 1930, by the sub-committee which studied the unemployment situation? I would also ask if the government is ready and willing to make a thorough inventory or classification of the unemployed in this country, with the story of each, with a view to finding a remedy for the trouble.

Mr. GERSHAW: I notice that in the resolution special reference is made to the drought stricken areas of the province of Saskatchewan, and I was wondering if the minister for the sake of fairness, and certainly for the sake of uniformity, had any plan in mind by which adjacent districts similarly situated would be treated in somewhat the same way. The Saskatchewan relief commission has very special privileges, but its jurisdiction stops at the boundaries of the province. Now, just beyond the boundary, farmers are living who have lost three successive crops and who are just as badly off as those farmers in the drought-stricken districts of Saskatchewan which come under the administration of the commission. The situation is causing a good deal of comment, and there does seem to be some discrimination. In the area over which the Saskatchewan commission presides the farmers are given orders on merchants for the supply of certain goods. In other districts the method of getting relief is much more complicated, much slower, and more uncertain. In these other districts the farmers have to get in touch with the police force, and after considerable delay a police officer goes out and makes investigation, and in many cases he does not seem to be very sympathetic to the farmer. Application has also to be made to the Red Cross, and altogether the situation of the farmers beyond the boundaries of Saskatchewan is very much worse than that of their neighbours who happen to be in the drought-stricken area of Saskatchewan. I wished to bring these facts to the attention of the minister because they are certainly causing a lot of discussion in those districts.

Mr. GORDON: In Saskatchewan the commission to which my hon. friend has made reference was set up by the province. That is peculiarly the duty of the province. While there is bound to be some criticism, I believe from all the reports I have received that the commission in Saskatchewan has carried on its work in a highly commendable manner. While I am not casting any doubt on the accuracy of my hon. friend's information, I must say