

*Inquiries of the Ministry*  
**LABOUR CONDITIONS**

**UNEMPLOYMENT IN VANCOUVER**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Angus MacInnis (Vancouver East):** I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Labour. Has his attention been directed to the serious unemployment situation in the city of Vancouver, and is the government giving consideration to assisting the employable unemployed who have no unemployment insurance entitlement or who have exhausted their benefits?

**Hon. Humphrey Mitchell (Minister of Labour):** My attention has been drawn to the condition referred to by the hon. member for Vancouver East. In reply to an inquiry which I made, the regional superintendent of the unemployment insurance commission at Vancouver sent me a telegram advising me that in his opinion the principal reason for the increase in the number of unemployed was the large influx of persons from other provinces, plus exceptional weather conditions which have retarded logging operations and building construction projects. A greater number were getting unemployment insurance benefits because of the expanded coverage and increase in the labour force of the province. But notwithstanding that, Mr. Speaker, I am sure my hon. friend will agree with me that British Columbia is a pleasant place in which to spend the winter.

**Mr. Coldwell:** Sometimes.

**An hon. Member:** Not lately.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Mitchell:** I think that is indicated by the smiles of hon. members from British Columbia. But I would point out that some people have to stay in areas in which there is a cold climate, in order to take their part in the nation's production.

**Mr. Campbell:** Cold comfort.

**Mr. Mitchell:** I can understand that, coming as it does from the hon. member for Peterborough West.

**Mr. Fraser:** Mr. Speaker, I will take all kinds of comments, but the member for Peterborough West did not make that remark. I think the minister should direct his remark to the member on my left who made the interjection.

**Mr. Mitchell:** I regret having said what I did to my hon. friend. I thought it was the hon. member for Peterborough West who made the interjection. However, the observation still stands. I think I should say that when people move from one part of Canada to another they should remember that there

[Mr. Gregg.]

are certain responsibilities which fall upon the individual rather than upon the state. If I decided to live in British Columbia—not that I particularly want to do that—before leaving Ontario I think I would make sure that I did not become a charge on the state when I arrived there.

**Mr. MacInnis:** A charge on the state?

**Mr. Mitchell:** I am saying a charge on the state.

**Mr. Fraser:** That is a question.

**Mr. Mitchell:** To emphasize what I have just said, may I give these figures. In January, 268 families moved from Saskatchewan to British Columbia, 260 from Alberta, 77 from Ontario, 64 from Manitoba, 12 from Nova Scotia and 5 from each of the provinces of Quebec and New Brunswick. These figures for one month give hon. members an indication of the number of people who move into that province during the winter months. I would also point out that the amount of money paid out in November, December and January by the unemployment insurance commission was \$2,650,954.81, of which \$1,462,296.61 was paid out in the city of Vancouver.

Last fall I made a radio broadcast, directed to Ontario and the prairie provinces, advising people not to go to British Columbia during the winter months. It was almost prophetic. I was not responsible for the weather there, which has been the reason for some of the present unemployment in that province. I must emphasize that people who go there in the winter months must do so on their own responsibility.

There is no federal provision for the payment of monetary assistance to unemployed employables who are not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits or who have lost their entitlement to such benefits because of having been out of work for a considerable time.

**Mr. Green:** May I ask a supplementary question? I take it from the last part of the minister's statement that the dominion accepts no responsibility whatever for the employable unemployed.

**Mr. Mitchell:** That is substantially correct at the moment, yes.

**Mr. Pearkes:** May I direct to the Minister of Mines and Resources a question which has some bearing on the statement just made by the Minister of Labour? Will the minister now consider returning the meteorological station to Victoria—because ever since the government moved it to Vancouver the weather in British Columbia has been growing steadily worse.