

it. Do you think that a wife left with a small child, her husband in hospital — should they get \$5 a month each and \$10 a month extra for sick relief? Is that the opinion of your Committee?

Mr. Ashbourne In reply to Mr. Fowler, of course this man would have to qualify for relief because I presume he has not any means or any bank account. If you give me the name of the person and the locality, I will investigate it for you.

Mr. Fowler I am not questioning you as a minister of the Crown. I know that you, as chairman of the Committee, are doing your utmost. In private I will give you the name of the man in question and point out to you where he is not getting near the amount stated in this report. It is not any fault of yourself or your Committee but the fault lies somewhere between the relieving officer and the department concerned.

Mr. Ashbourne I will investigate that.

Mr. Starkes Would this be correct, page 19¹ — 341 receiving able-bodied relief in March, 1946?

Mr. Ashbourne These are the figures supplied us by the department.

Mr. Starkes And in April 1939, the total on relief was 84,659 — that was five years after Commission of Government came here. Would that be right?

Mr. Ashbourne Yes.

Mr. Vardy In regard to the 341 on able-bodied relief in White Bay, I asked the department why that was so and they explained it was in a section where the fishery was an absolute failure. They were compelled to give temporary relief.

With reference to the 84,000, that was the peak of all time.

Mr. Northcott To go back to the "three score years and ten". Take an old man of 75 years, he gets \$12.50. Is that man entitled to able-bodied

relief or sick relief?

Mr. Ashbourne No. The amount is different now, it is \$18. If a man is married, he and his wife get \$30 a quarter.

Mr. Starkes Old age pension?

Mr. Ashbourne Yes.

Mr. Chairman Perhaps it might be just as well to run through these tables so that members of the committee could ask questions. One or two questions are given where we have read thus far.

[The Secretary read the table²]

Mr. Hollett In that summary, under able-bodied relief, the number is given as 2,688. I look back to page 18 and I find that is wholly for St. John's. There is no able-bodied relief anywhere else?

Mr. Ashbourne I do not think there was; it was practically non-existent.

Mr. Hollett That was the only able-bodied relief last year. I want to bring that up because I saw where there were something like 5,600 on relief in Halifax which is another seaport town. It is something which is not the general condition of things either in this country or in Canada, but it is a seasonal thing which takes place.

Mr. Ashbourne Yes, it is a seasonal thing. These men got out of employment and cannot get any further work. Naturally they have to fall back on the government. I presume it is mostly labourers and longshoremen. In winter time work is slack. I presume the same thing would apply to Halifax.

Mr. Ballam If you look through the whole year, you will find those conditions existed throughout the year and not seasonally except for White Bay.

Mr. Vardy At the present time there are slightly over 100 outside the city on able-bodied relief.

[The Secretary continued to read. The committee then rose and reported progress and the Convention adjourned]

¹Volume II:275, figures for White Bay.

²Volume II:276.