

Subsection 5.—The Unemployment and Farm Relief Act, 1931.

The Parliament of Canada, at the Session which closed on Aug. 3, 1931, enacted the Unemployment and Farm Relief Act, 1931, being an Act "for relieving distress, providing employment and maintaining within the competence of Parliament, peace, order and good government throughout Canada"

The Act specifies that the Governor in Council may "provide for the construction, extension or improvement of public works, buildings, undertakings, railways, highways, subways, bridges and canals, harbours and wharves, and any other works and undertakings of any nature or kind whatsoever; assist in defraying the cost of the production, sale and distribution of the products of the field, farm, forest, sea, river and mine; assist provinces, cities, towns, municipalities, and other bodies or associations, by loaning moneys thereto or guaranteeing repayment of moneys thereby, or in such other manner as may be deemed necessary or advisable; take all such other measures as may be deemed necessary or advisable for carrying out the provisions of this Act".

No definite sum of money is set aside by the Act and the amounts to be expended by the Dominion Government for these purposes are left to the discretion of the Government, who will be guided by the unemployment situation existing.

During the summer months the various provinces, at the request of the Dominion Government, held surveys to determine the number of persons unemployed in order that the Dominion and Provincial Governments might be presented with a complete picture of unemployment conditions in Canada, and prepare programs of public works and undertakings to cope with the situation. The following statement shows the details of the unemployment registration which was completed Sept. 1, 1931:—

Province.	Married Men.	Single Men.	Women.	Not Classified.	Total.
Prince Edward Island.....	-	-	-	-	1,500
Nova Scotia ¹	-	-	-	-	18,000
New Brunswick.....	-	-	-	-	7,858
Quebec.....	-	-	-	-	109,000
Ontario ²	71,500	58,500	-	-	130,000
Manitoba.....	26,486	10,248	4,755	450	41,939
Saskatchewan ³	-	-	-	-	26,094
Alberta.....	9,220	6,230	-	-	15,450
British Columbia ⁴	-	-	764	-	38,880
Total.....	-	-	-	-	379,721

¹ Figures are estimated, as no registration was held.

² Ontario reports the probable number in real need of employment to be about 70,000.

³ Including 8,237 married men, 4,851 single men and 764 women registered in cities.

⁴ This includes 5,940 transients and 6,745 aliens.

Under the Regulations governing the administration of the Act, the Minister of Labour is authorized to enter into agreements with the various provinces for payment to the provinces, or through the provinces to the municipalities, of such proportion of the expenditures made by the provinces or municipalities for public works and undertakings carried out under the Act as may be agreed upon. The regulations also provide that the eight-hour day must prevail on all works and undertakings carried out under the Act; that the wages paid may be fixed by the provincial