

Our brief suggested to the Board that it consider another important point in reference to minimum wages: "That increased wages to employees will make management become more efficient either by new production techniques or better management. Workers cannot be expected to subsidize a weak management or an industry that is not viable by being paid inadequate wages or having poor working conditions."

We included in our brief a number of exhibits. One exhibit noted the high unemployment rate of 7.7 per cent in December, 1969 with only 21 per cent or 44,293 workers organized out of a labour force of 207,000. We posed the following question to the Board—To what degree does the low percentage of unionization of the working population and the high degree of unemployment help in keeping the minimum wage and minimum standards of employment down? To date, we have not received an answer.

In June of 1969, our Federation presented a brief to certain New Brunswick Cabinet Ministers requesting legislation that would encourage co-operative housing—During the last sitting of the Legislature the Government passed legislation for co-operative housing. Meetings have been going on between members of the Atlantic Co-Op Council and the four Federations of Labour of the Atlantic Provinces to establish a full-time organizer-technician to act as a Third Force to interest groups in co-op housing. This would be similar to the good work that St. Francis Xavier Extension Department has done in Nova Scotia.

At our recent annual convention a Political Education Conference was held with representatives from the three political parties in New Brunswick and a representative from the labour movement to discuss the White Paper on Social Development and Social Welfare with questions from the delegates. This dialogue gave our members an opportunity to hear some of the problems relating to this vital question.

New Brunswick Federation of Labour's Views

Our Federation seriously respect the task you have undertaken and we fully realize that there is no simple solution to poverty.

We feel it will take the efforts of many people, groups, organizations and various government departments and agencies.

We sincerely hope that your recommendations will lead to a dedicated effort to make

Canada a better place to live in for all Canadians.

In line with what we have just said, we would like to offer our views in those areas where we feel it would be of most benefit for the plight of the poor.

1. *Encourage Collective Bargaining*—Mr. William Mahoney, National Director of the United Steelworkers of America in an article that appeared in the Toronto Daily Star on February 6th said

"actually free collective bargaining and the growth of democratic trade unionism has been something that has been tolerated in this country rather than encouraged."

Trade unionism found its start in the ranks of the poor. Legislation, employers and Labour Relations Boards are continuously placing roadblocks in the way of workers seeking their universal human right "to form and to join trade unions for the protection of their interest". Canada, through its eleven jurisdictions of labour must revamp their thinking in this area and think of people, in line with the Conventions and Recommendations of the I.L.O. as a minimum standard. A country such as ours should be setting the example rather than trying to catch up. It should be borne in mind that only 21 per cent of the work force in New Brunswick is organized as compared with 30 per cent in Canada.

2. *Minimum Wage-Fixing*—We are of the firm belief that people as human beings still take pride in themselves and their families. Minimum wage legislation must provide workers with an incentive to work. Minimum wage rates should be established at a level that would maintain a suitable standard of living for a family unit of husband, wife and two children. They should be adjusted upwards with the cost-of-living. Once a worker begins to make a contribution to the economy he will want to seek ways and means to improve his status to purchase those goods and services that will make living more enjoyable for his family.

3. *Economic Development*—We have focused some of our concern earlier on this question. The continuing out-migration of our people which was 35,127 between 1961-1966 (Second Annual Review, Atlantic Provinces Economic Council) represented over 80 per cent under 29 years of age. Thus, due to the tendency to migrate in the more productive age groups, there is an excess of those in the age groups who are unable to work because