

I therefore take this opportunity to send you again my booklet on the subject. Should you desire some more copies to be distributed among the members of your union, I will gladly send you any number at five cents a copy, franco.

The introduction of this matter by witnesses before the Committee is justified by the advocacy of it in that every piece of literature throughout the country bears that statement or implication.

Q. It is not our custom for members of the Committee to argue with a witness, but I would say this, that my friend Mr. Letellier urged that we make a study of family allowances, and in connection with that study we are seeking to bring any witnesses here who have any definite information pro and con. Father Lebel was one of the witnesses asked to appear, because he was known as an advocate of the scheme. But his proposals are not in any sense endorsed by the Committee; he is merely one witness, as you are a witness.

The CHAIRMAN: I think Miss Whitton understands that.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I do not think it is fair because all three witnesses have assumed that there was a definite proposition being advanced in this Committee. Mrs. Kensit went so far as to speak about an Act or Bill, thus showing I think somewhat of a misapprehension as to the stage we are at, and I think it would be well to have that point cleared up.

Discussion followed.

*By Mr. Woodsworth:*

Q. Another thing you suggest, Miss Whitton, is that you would not like to admit that wages are low in Canada, or so low that a measure of this kind would be at all necessary. You are very familiar with statistics, and I think you have read a report of this Committee with regard to the minimum wage. Will you not admit that at the present time the actual wages paid are far below the minimum considered necessary by social workers to maintain a family in decency.—A. I recall my statement. I stated I would not admit that they were low over any broad general group. That they are too low in certain groups, I would say, but I would not subscribe entirely to some of the evidence in regard to the relations of wages and income which was given before the Committee last year, and in some of the budget relation. Mrs. Kensit's evidence would show that in certain groups and in certain industries they are too low, but what the social workers of the country have repeatedly asked and urged is that we should be given an economic study of wages of the cost of living, the cost of dependence in this country, so that we might ascertain once for all whether it is the wages paid or whether it is the unemployed period, and the lack of organization in the equalization of the employment that is not the more serious problem which we have to face, because that is the manifestation of it that recurs again and again and again in our work. We can get a man and his family started, or employed for a period with a fairly decent income, but it is the long periods of unemployment. Then there is the problem of the unemployable man, or the man who can be employed at so little; his service is worth so little to the state or to industry that it creates a problem. I would not claim that wages generally throughout the country are absolutely capable of maintaining a decent standard of living in every industry, but I do think the question of their being too low over a broad general group would be open to question.

Q. Statistics show that in all manufacturing industries in Canada the average wage is in the neighbourhood of one thousand dollars; I cannot give it to you to the exact dollar, but in the neighbourhood of one thousand dollars. Would you consider that a very low wage on which to maintain a family?—A. That is the point I wish to make. Taking the whole range of wages over

[Miss Charlotte Whitton.]