

Immediately on receipt of this circular the postmaster will take steps to arrange the staffs and hours of duty so as to take care of the work with a minimum number of employees, and will, as soon as possible, report such rearrangement to the department giving particulars as to the number of employees who could be released as the result of the more economical distribution of the staff.

That is the contribution of this government to the unemployment situation in Canada. They are giving a lead to private employers to cut down staffs and to put more people on the list of unemployed to be cared for by the municipalities. In this instance I am afraid the government is setting a rather dangerous precedent. We know that when a misunderstanding arises between workers in public utilities and their employers, or in other industries, the government sends out representatives from the Labour department to try to effect a conciliation. What position can the government take when it becomes known that these employees were only resisting conditions similar to those that the government itself has been putting into effect, without consulting in any way their organized employees? Where is the boasted collective bargaining about which we have heard so much? If private employers treated their organized employees in the way this government treats its employees, there would be strikes and discord from one end of Canada to the other.

At this point I should like to read two telegrams I received from organized federal employees of Vancouver. One received on April 19 is as follows:

Postal Employees Amalgamated Civil Servants protest post office circular 196. This increases hours of night work, hours of Sunday work and lengthens daily tour of duty in that it gives the postmaster authority to spread working day over twenty-four hours period. This circular eliminates payment for over time in excess of regular duty and for work performed on statutory holidays. Through application this circular many employees will be dismissed which means remainder of staff will be required to perform extra work under more difficult conditions. Salary cut bad enough but consider proposed action infinitely worse in that it means loss of all rights gained through organized effort of past twenty years. Proposed action will aggravate unemployment situation. Consult colleagues and interview National Secretary Knowles for full particulars.

That is signed by D. J. McCarthy, Secretary for the Amalgamated Postal Employees. Then, I have a shorter one from the Secretary of the United Postal Employees of Vancouver. This is dated April 22, and is as follows:

Meeting held under auspices Vancouver Branch United Postal Employees strongly protest recent order PSB 196 whereby improve-

ments in working conditions in Post Office Department gained over period of twenty years are nullified. This follows ten per cent salary cut and withholding of statutory increases in the interests of staff and in conformity of principles of organized labour we ask your support in above protest.

May I repeat that this government is setting a very dangerous example to private employers of labour in Canada.

In the speech from the throne we were told that conditions were gradually improving. At the very time that speech was being drafted and was put into the hands of the Governor General, what were the actual conditions throughout the length and breadth of Canada? The Labour Gazette for the month of March gives the following information from the reports of the employment offices in the different provinces—the figures are for the month of January, 1932, as compared with the months of December and January, 1931.

In Nova Scotia, the positions offered show a decline of 32 per cent as compared with the preceding month, and an increase of one per cent over the month of January, 1931.

In New Brunswick the demand for workers was 17 per cent less than in the preceding month, and nearly 38 per cent less than in the month of January, 1931.

In Quebec the orders received for workers were 19 per cent less than for the month of December and for the month of January, 1931.

In Ontario the orders received at the Ontario office called for 16 per cent less than in the preceding month, and 49 per cent less than in the corresponding month in 1931.

Orders received at the Manitoba offices were seven per cent less than in the preceding month, and nearly 47 per cent below that of 1931.

In Saskatchewan the number of orders for workers were 25 per cent less than in the month of December and nearly 32 per cent less than in the month of January, 1931.

In Alberta employment opportunities were eight per cent less than in the preceding month, but over 25 per cent less than in January, 1931.

In British Columbia the demand for labour through the labour offices was 22 per cent less than the month of December, and 31 per cent less than for the month of January, 1931.

The figures I have given, showing the requests for labour in the different provinces, are really the best indication of business conditions. They show that in every province of the dominion with the exception of Nova Scotia, requests for labour were less in the month of January, 1932, than in the same