

*Proposed Committee on Unemployment*

obtained, we find that in spite of such increases purchasing power is almost exactly where it was a good number of years ago.

I can well recall that when people were getting 40 cents an hour they could buy butter for 17 or 18 cents a pound. Today we find that butter costs three times as much and that the average wage is three times as much or a little better. Therefore we have not come very far in that respect. But we find that labour, in its attempt to increase its purchasing power and its standard of living, is continually asking for higher wages, and so it must under our present financial and economic system. It is the only way in which purchasing power is brought into the hands of consumers.

It is very important that labour should have and strive toward good leadership of its unions. In that respect I should like to refer to a letter in the *Prince George Citizen* of February 8 which reads as follows:

While we are out hunting for subversive literature, let us not forget the subversion of the far right. Anyone opposed to unionism as a means of bringing the voice of labour to bear upon the problems of management is subversive or fascist. To say down with unionism is equal to saying down with democracy. Constructive criticism of the union's methods of achieving their desired ends is democratic and desirable. Criticism aimed at permanently destroying unionism is fascist and unhealthy.

That brings me back again to the point with which I started my speech, management-labour relations. We find that a great deal of the trouble leading to unemployment stems from labour-management relations which are not conducive to good employment. I think management can play an effective role in bringing labour and management together. Where there are unions I think management should assist and encourage those working in the plants in the obtaining of good leadership. In my opinion much can be done in that regard. In many parts of the country there is a need from time to time for recreational facilities and other projects which could be undertaken jointly by management and labour for the benefit of all concerned. If we had more vision concerning such matters and put forth greater efforts towards getting something done in this regard I think we would find a higher level of employment and increased production, and therefore a higher standard of living for all.

Many times both sides, management and labour, fail to present a true picture of their problems. I believe that heads of labour unions and those in management positions could well look into this matter from the point of view of getting people to present facts and not dodge issues. We find that in many

cases union papers, the organs of organized labour, are blasting management, and management through the press is blasting labour and labour unions. In my view a great deal can be accomplished by union and management representatives sitting around a table and talking things over on a sound and sensible basis. I think that our efforts as members of parliament and the efforts of the government should be directed toward bringing about a realization of this responsibility.

Personally, I am opposed to the professional bargainer. I think it is wrong in principle, because the very existence of the professional bargainer depends on the animosity between the employer and the employee. I will agree that expert advice is desirable. I think we should have expert advice, but I believe it is wrong in principle for people to set themselves up in business as professional bargainers, because their livelihood depends on the animosity between the employer and employee. As soon as good will is created between the employer and the employee the professional bargainer is out of a job.

I feel that we would be better off and have a higher level of employment if bargaining were conducted on a local level as much as possible. I do not say that is always possible, but I think it is most desirable wherever it is possible. We would thereby avoid long lay-offs and unemployment due to strikes. As I said before, that is a very unhealthy situation. I do not think there ever was a strike in which labour was not caught in the squeeze. Labour is bound to be caught in the squeeze either way, whether they strike or whether they do not. The only way to avoid strikes is to get better relationships between employers and employees. I think we, as a government, could do a lot in that regard, as I shall mention a little later.

The other day we read a slogan which said, "Young Canada has a right to a job." I agree with that. I agree also that if young Canada has a right to a job, that means just what it says. I disagree heartily with the idea that people may not be allowed to work if they desire to work. If we are going to adopt the position that young Canada has a right to a job, then I think we must stay with it all the way down the line and not bar people from working if they so desire. During a strike we often find that people are barred from working, and unemployment rises continually in the strike area. I realize that the strike weapon is the only weapon labour really has, but on the other hand I