

Mr. CARON: Thank you.

Mr. BEECH: Mr. Chairman, I see an item here "commission to Post Office Department" in the amount of \$825,000 and further down another item "postage" in the amount of \$825,000. Could we have an explanation in regard to those items?

Mr. W. K. RUTHERFORD (*Director, Administrative Services, Department of Labour*): The item covering "commission to Post Office Department" is a Post Office charge in regard to unemployment insurance stamps. This is a very small charge. It amounts to .08 of one per cent of the sales of unemployment insurance stamps.

The item "postage" represents the regular postage used by our office in shipping material to claimants and other offices, and so on. It is a very large item, that is true. Actually it is a transfer of funds to another government department, but it represents regular postage.

Mr. CARON: Mr. Chairman, when a skilled man is out of work does the Unemployment Insurance Commission force him to accept labour work if there is nothing suitable for him?

Mr. W. THOMSON (*Director, Employment Branch, Department of Labour*): If a skilled worker registers at the local office he is registered according to the work for which he is suited and qualified. If there are any vacancies in that occupation and he happens to be the most suitable person he would be referred to it. If there is a lesser skilled vacancy such as labour, and so on, it will be offered to him in the first instance.

If he is referred to a skilled job for which he is suited and refuses to accept it there is a strong chance of his being disqualified from receiving unemployment insurance benefits. If he is a skilled worker and is referred to a labour job and turns it down, in all probability he would not be disqualified from receiving unemployment insurance benefit.

Mr. CARON: Does it ever happen that a skilled man is disqualified from receiving benefits because he refuses to accept a labour job?

Mr. McGREGOR: If a skilled man was unemployed for a long period of time and it was evident that there were no jobs available in his skilled trade, and as time progressed, jobs of lower categories, and of lower skills would become suitable in his case.

Eventually, after a long period of unemployment a labour job might be considered suitable in his case.

Mr. STARR: I think, Mr. Chairman, that that answer would probably also answer the question of Mr. Houck earlier where, as Mr. Houck suggested as an example, a person may be offered a job in the fruit industry.

Mr. HOUCK: And refuses to take it, what about that?

Mr. STARR: Well, it would depend on this fact; if it was a long period of unemployment, that is, if he had been unemployed for a long time and efforts had been exhausted in placing him in a suitable job in accordance with his qualifications, if he refused that job as a farm labourer he would be disqualified. You have to consider the many factors involved.

Mr. MACINNIS: Mr. Chairman, mention has been made of field staffs working overtime. Do you consider this in the best interests of the unemployment situation?

Mr. STARR: Mr. Chairman, our difficulty has been that when the peak load is on in the national unemployment insurance office the regular staff work overtime. We also employ well over 3,000 casual workers to carry on these offices during that peak load.