

moment presume to assert that these figures should be regarded as representing an absolute mathematically accurate statement. I am, however, profoundly convinced from my study of them and from watching the fluctuations and tendencies over the years, that they have a very important value, so far as assisting in the interpretation of what industrial conditions prevail in Canada. I think, Mr. Chairman, it is the purpose of Mr. Brown, the Assistant Deputy Minister, if it has not already been done, to distribute the report of the Royal Commission on Seasonal Unemployment in Manitoba.

The CHAIRMAN: We have it here.

WITNESS: I have had the advantage of somewhat cursorily glancing over this report, and I find in connection with it certain definite expressions of opinion stated therein regarding the value of statistics gathered by the Department of Labour from Trade Unions respecting the volume of unemployment shown among their membership, the value of the Employment Office Statistics, and the value of the statistics published by the Bureau of Statistics covering returns received from employers showing the number of employees in their employ. I find on page 9 of the Manitoba Report on Seasonal Unemployment this statement right at the top of the page:

With regard to the first, it may be said that they are totally inadequate—

That has reference to the Trade Union figures.

—because the number of Unions reporting is so small compared with the total number of Unions in Canada, and these Unions report only very irregularly so that it is impossible to compare figures given one month with those of another month.

A very definite and somewhat damaging statement, I am afraid. The fact of the matter is, as already indicated, that out of approximately 2,600 Local Trade Unions in Canada over 1,600 reported to the Department of Labour months. As a matter of fact, I may say that the latest returns we have just recently received runs over 1,700. That percentage I think cannot be regarded as being so small that it carries no value with it; considerably over 60 per cent of the Local Unions report.

Then with regard to the allegation that these reports are received only irregularly, I wish to correct that impression. Ninety per cent of the Local Unions that do report, report regularly. There are variations with regard to the remaining 10 per cent. I have to make that statement, Mr. Chairman, because I do not think that erroneous impressions should be permitted to be broadcast, and as this report is before you for your consideration, I thought it advisable that I should make this statement.

Then with regard to the statistics gathered by the Bureau of Statistics from employers, this report states:

The statistics published in 'The Employment Situation' since they include only the employees of those establishments which employ fifteen or more, necessarily omit a considerable proportion of the wage earning class. Further, the index is based on the number of employees on the payrolls of these reporting firms on the first of January, 1920, and is rather to be considered as an index of the employment situation. To illustrate: If a firm which had fifteen or more employees in 1920 has in the meantime absorbed some other establishment, and so increased its business, the index of employment will now be high, although the total number of employees may be less than the total number of employees originally on the payrolls of the establishments which have been amalgamated.

[Mr. R. A. Rigg.]