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Minister, however, that while he would much prefer these few days of grace, that if the Prime Minister considered the approach must be made, at once, it was, of course, for him to decide and Mr. Ralston would naturally accept his decision.

2. Letters to the Provinces. I have had some further discussion with Mr. McLarty about the formal approach to be made to the Provinces, while preparing the draft letters to the Premiers of the three Provinces concerned. Mr. Power was also consulted, and it appears that his conversation with Mr. Godbout was confined to a very general discussion on his attitude to unemployment insurance, and that the question of amending the Constitution to make this possible, was not broached. In the circumstances, there would seem to be a strong case for a further informal approach to Quebec before any formal letter is sent. While it is conceivable that the Federal government might be prepared to go to Westminster for an amendment, without the concurrence of Alberta or even New Brunswick, this course would not seem to be politically possible if Quebec dissented. It will almost certainly be impossible to keep the formal approach to the Provinces, confidential, as the Premiers will have to consult their colleagues, and, especially if there is any disposition not to agree, the news will almost certainly leak out (particularly in Edmonton). If a formal request is not acceded to by Quebec, and in consequence the measure is not proceeded with, the government cannot fail to lose credit in other parts of the country, and the relations with the Quebec government itself, will, as a result, be less cordial. This point has been discussed with Mr. McLarty who agrees that the government should be completely satisfied as to the favourable attitude of Quebec before a letter is sent to Mr. Godbout, by the Prime Minister.

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The attached draft letters to the three Premiers are not entirely identical. In the cases of Alberta and New Brunswick, an attempt has been made to meet the point raised in each case in the earlier correspondence and to save the faces of those governments as far as possible. In the case of Quebec