Correspondence on Surcharges

scope of this resolution, in classifying the various categories of workers according to their skills, while taking into account opportunities for employment in various segments of the labour market.

I recognize that this project might have a beneficial effect, but it might also be one of those types of agencies we all know, which operate rather slowly and, through an administrative machinery that is very slow in getting started, tend to create intricacies which result in troubles instead of simplifying problems.

I am not one of those who believe that the fact of classifying workers will create new jobs. I admit that it is important nowadays to enable workers to enjoy a more adequate training, and especially to allow young workers to gain the required experience so that they can be hired by the employer who wants experienced hands, because it often happens that some well disposed young men and no doubt well qualified ones too-since many received diplomas and grades which show that they had the courage to prepare themselves-unfortunately cannot find a job because the employer also wants the new employee to have a practical experience of the trade, apart from his theoretical studies. How do you think a young man just starting out in life can show he has had previous experience when he has not had a job yet?

All industrial production, especially, is intended to make a profit. It inevitably follows that an employer will seek the services of experienced workers, who will help reduce production costs and enable him to make a larger profit. Many industries have even organized job work to increase production. I am well aware of what goes on in the woods, where lumbermen especially, besides having to supply a power saw worth from \$250 to \$300, must do job work at a price which is often too low. Automation has not helped the lumberman; he is paying the consequences.

Considering that, under present conditions, working in the woods is most tiresome—and I know whereof I speak, for I earned my living as a lumberman during 22 years—the older lumbermen could benefit by becoming instructors in their trade, which requires a lot of skill.

I shall comment on that later on in the course of my remarks when I put forward my own suggestions as to the possibility for experienced workers to become instructors.

In face of automation, it is suggested that it would be absurd and unsound to attempt to destroy it. On the other hand, it is recognized that automation replaces man in a certain proportion and is bound to replace him in a larger proportion in the future. So we sometimes wonder whether it would not be better for the worker to retire at 55 instead of 65.

A 55 year old man would not be useless. He is experienced and wise and at that age, he should lead and not serve, he can render great services by giving leadership to society, he can know and understand his country, think over the future of his family and finally, at that age, he must think more than ever about eternal life.

The question is not to prevent a man from working at 55, and I do not want to be misunderstood on that point, but to change his work. At 20, he is strong, skilful and vigorous. He can do manual work. At 55 he is losing his strength; therefore, his work should call more on his intellectual faculties. He could let younger people benefit from his experience; he could, for instance, become an instructor in some sections of industry.

No man would be hurt at going up one degree in the scale of values.

Young people, those who do not work, those who lose hope, would find in the positions that would become vacant the work they need to spend their energy, to keep busy, to hope and to get married. Finally, our young people would find again the ideal they are now losing. And fathers would encourage their sons to build their own homes, would help them if need be.

If a greater number of adults were to take an active part in municipal, provincial or federal politics, it would be all to the good, I think. Is it not shameful in a country like ours to see a man of 60 having to keep a man of 20 or 25 who is unemployed?

The contrary would be more normal in a wealthy and prosperous country. That people should retire with an income at 55, that is normal; but that people should be unemployed at 20, 25 or 30, that is hateful and shameful.

We are of the opinion that if that suggestion were implemented, there might be less juvenile delinquency, less unemployment, the moral and social level would undoubtedly be higher and those older workers could, as instructors, let the younger ones benefit from their experience.