

waited in vain, because there was no Prime Minister and no Minister of Labour present. It is suggested that this is a matter of re-instatement. This is not a matter of re-instatement. The men are not being re-instated. The government that was in power at that time saw fit to re-engage these men in postal work, and it is not the suggestion or the intention of this government that these men be re-instated, but ever since that time these men who were skilled in the work in which they were engaged have been paid the wages of apprentices. Now, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, the labourer is worthy of his hire, and this country has been engaging these men, and paying them the wages of apprentices. For these reasons, I cannot see anything but fairness in the proposal that the postal workers should be paid the moneys they have earned in the past several years. I heartily concur in the attitude that has been taken by my hon. friend from Winnipeg South Centre.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Mr. Chairman, there is developing a very large body of opinion in Winnipeg that, regardless of the merits of the strike, the time has come when there should be some sort of settlement of this matter, which has constituted a long outstanding grievance. There are a great many people who are to-day taking the position that the strike has been over now for some nine or ten years, and that it is time for us to forget some of the bitterness of those days, and so far as the ordinary routine work is concerned try to arrange the affairs of this country in such a way that the best work can be done by public officials. The hope of doing anything like that is absolutely shattered by such a speech as that to which we have just listened to-night from the lips of the hon. leader of the opposition. He says that there is a vital difference between the strike in Toronto and the strike in Winnipeg. He says it was quite right that the men who went out on strike in Toronto several years ago should be re-instated. I suppose that in going out they had violated their oath of office, but nothing is said about any such violation by the hon. leader of the opposition in that connection. What is the distinction that the hon. leader of the opposition makes between the two? He said that the men in Toronto went out because they themselves had a grievance, and that the men in Winnipeg went out because they had sympathy for other people who had a grievance. I wonder which is the higher type, after all. As a matter of fact, the men in Winnipeg did have grievances. They had

[Mr. Howden.]

grievances the year before; they had a strike the year before, and it had not been satisfactorily settled. Had they not had grievances they would not have been so readily appealed to as they were. I am afraid I must admit that—they could not have been so readily appealed to had they not had grievances. But if you are to make this distinction, that when a man feels injured himself he can take action, but when he feels another man is being injured and wants to help him, then his action becomes criminal—I say that is a new doctrine.

I had hoped I might not have to speak on this question, because again and again the Winnipeg strike has been dragged before this house. Personally I am not at all ashamed of my association with the workers of Winnipeg at that time, and although I was in no sense responsible for the calling of the strike, the position which I held with the workers enabled me to see something of the inside of the committee meetings that were being held at least during the last weeks of the strike. I was not there at first. I listened very closely to the evidence which was given at the trial, and I am proud to have a close personal friendship with a number of the men who were prominent in that industrial trouble.

Now, I do not like to accuse the leader of the opposition of wilfully misrepresenting things; I hope he has not done so. I should like to think he would be fair. But I do not think he could put before the country anything more fundamentally untrue and more cruel than the statements that he has made to-night. I cannot blame him, nor can I blame the country very much, for having an entirely false impression of what took place. In the first instance, the official reports were very misleading. I should like to take a minute or two to deal with them, and since the leader of the opposition has occupied a long time, I think I will follow his example even if this is the last night of the session. I cannot let these statements go as they have been presented to-night. At the outset, Commissioner Perry, of the Northwest Mounted Police, went west to make inquiries into what he understood to be the industrial unrest throughout that section of Canada. He set spies on the trade unions. They listened to what the men were saying. Undoubtedly the men were interested in the great world events that were taking place, and, among others, in the Russian revolution. The men were talking quite freely about the advisability of directing their efforts in this country along lines that would more effectively solidify their ranks in order that they might