

ment officials push their way into trade union or other labour class organizations in order to spy upon them. If we are going to do that with regard to labour organizations, we are equally justified in doing it with regard to certain large companies such as banks and so forth. I fancy the latter are much more dangerous to the welfare of the country at large than are the labour organizations. Personally, I want to express my disgust at the despicable methods which in the past both under this and under the past administration have been adopted in developing the spy system. I do not know whether it still prevails or not, but a few years ago we had the police employing people from American detective firms under the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and turning these men into provocative agents. Again and again when visiting in the mining camps in the west I have had labour people come to me and say: If there is any suggestion made in the way of provoking trouble be careful, because that suggestion comes from an agent of the government. I say, Mr. Chairman, that that method is beneath contempt. That officials operating under a government department should deliberately set about to provoke action and then afterwards lay charges against those who follow their lead, revolts one's sense of decency. It came out in connection with some of our Winnipeg troubles a few years ago that a certain constable in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police had actually sold literature which he knew to be banned in order to lay charges against those who subsequently handled that literature. I think that a situation of that kind should not be tolerated.

Further, I note that there is to be provision made in this bill—I might as well mention it now because I do not want to take up an undue amount of time—for the enlistment of constables without pay. Either that means, I take it, that we are going to adopt press gang methods and force people to carry out certain police duties without pay, or it means that certain privileged people are to have the right to work in a general way under the police force without having to assume any very great responsibility for their personal actions. The Secretary of State told us a few weeks ago on an occasion when he had to stand off the civil and provincial police in the city of Montreal at his election booth. Now I can readily understand that if this bill is adopted it might very well be that certain people would exercise a very decided influence in political and industrial matters, and armed with the power of the law, although receiving no police salary, they would be able to dictate

[Mr. Woodsworth.]

to the private citizens what could be done, and themselves be immune, having special privileges. I object to any provision of that kind.

Further than that, we were told by the Minister of Justice just now that the commissioner desires to be out of the city in the performance of his duties. I have no objection whatever to that, but I do think it is highly desirable that the commissioner should restrict his activities to his police duties proper. A few weeks ago Major-General J. H. MacBrien, the present commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, was reported to have said when addressing a "Vimy night" gathering in Toronto:

It is notable that ninety-nine per cent of these fellows—

He was speaking of the communists:

—are foreigners, and many of them have not been here long. The best thing to do would be to send them back where they came from, in every possible way.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: He continued:

If we were rid of them, there would be no unemployment or unrest in Canada.

I do not hear the hon. gentlemen who said "hear, hear," earlier on, endorsing that statement. My point is that whilst it is perfectly competent and fitting for any member of parliament to express his views with regard to the communists, it is not fitting that the head of the mounted police should so express himself in public gatherings.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Why not?

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I will read an extract from an editorial in the *Western Producer* of April 21 last, commenting on this speech as reported:

These remarks are strongly reminiscent of a certain brand of irresponsible politician, and in uttering them the commissioner did not distinguish himself as a public servant, nor contribute in any degree whatever to the solution of the difficult problems of the hour. On the contrary, if he really believes what he is reported to have said, he reveals himself as a very foolish and amazingly uninformed man. Of the many suggestions for curing unemployment, Commissioner MacBrien's should rank among the first for ineptitude and silliness. Apart from this aspect of the incident, however, it would seem to be much more fitting for the head of our police force, in his public actions and remarks, to direct his attention to the enforcement of the multitude of laws which are already on the statute books rather than to join the ranks of that huge army of busybodies who never weary of demanding new enactments so that their petty prejudices might be elevated to the rank of public nuisances by receiving the sanction of law.