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### T. & N. O. Should Keep on Employees

Writer Thinks Government Railway Should Not Add to Present Unemployment. Railway Making Money. Why Decrease Service.

In a recent issue The Advance referred to the reduction in service at the T. & N. O. station and questioned whether this was good policy. Largely through curtailment of service the railways generally in Canada have been losing money. They blame it all on the competition of the buses and the trucks, but it is an odd fact that the reduction in business has followed the decrease in service. On the other hand the T. & N. O. did not decrease the quality or the extent of its service until recently, and the T. & N. O. has been one of the very few railways on the continent to be a success financially in recent years. There are more people than The Advance who are thinking along these lines of service in which curtailment is being made by the T. & N. O. these days. In addition there is the added evil of increasing unemployment by the curtailment of service. This latter point is stressed by a writer in The Toronto Star. This writer's letter is as follows:—  
To the Editor of The Star.  
Sir: No doubt most of The Star

readers have heard of the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Rly. Government owned and operated, it runs north through the province from North Bay to Cochrane, and was built about 25 years ago to open up the new north and induce the settlers to come in.

That this venture was a huge success is now an established fact; the T. & N. O. not only brought in the settlers but played a major part in opening up the mineral wealth of the province.

We have seen press headlines from time to time of the railway's pushing farther and farther north until at the present time the optimistic dream of thirty years ago is about to be realized in the establishing of the northern terminal at Moose Factory, James Bay.

The Ontario government's commission chairman, Mr. Geo. W. Lee, has reminded us time and again through the press that there was no depression or lack of business along the line, hundreds of men being employed at extra summer work and railway construction, and that the unemployment in the northern towns was caused by transients and floaters. In spite of these optimistic statements some thirty-five or forty men, including conductors, engineers, firemen, trainmen, shopmen and operators, have, during the past two weeks, been laid off. Most of these are married men with families and holding service records of from five to ten years. Several local passenger

trains have been taken off and staff reductions made in every department with the exception of the head office at Osh Bay.

During recent years the T. & N. O. Rly., through its chairman, Mr. Lee, has turned over to the government cheques of a million and a million and a quarter dollars, representing net annual operating profits. Judging by the amount of business being handled at the present time by the railway, this year will be no exception. Why the recent staff reduction programme?

The mining towns of Kirkland Lake, Timmins and South Porcupine are booming, and freight receipts at these points are equal to or greater than those of the palmy days. The Abitibi Mill at Iroquois Falls is running full time and turning over to the railway from 20 to 25 cars of paper daily. The Kapuskasing Mill output is also handled daily over the T. & N. O., and last, but by no means least, freight revenue accruing from the Abitibi Power development project at Frasersdale Canyon is alone sufficient to offset any deficit due to inactivity on the part of pulpwood shippers.

#### NORTHERNER.

It is no necessary to agree with all in the above letter to feel that the whole matter as outlined in the communication is well worthy of consideration. The T. & N. O. Railway should avoid by every possible means the adding to unemployment. It may be taken as a fact that this province and the Dominion as a whole will have to provide for all the unemployed, whether they be railroad employees or otherwise. Even if the railwayman let go by the T. & N. O. Railway secure other work it will only mean that they will take the places of other men who would have had the work. The country, accordingly, being pledged to support the men in one way or another, it seems only reasonable that this be done as far as at all possible by leaving them in their normal employment. This would be desirable just as a logical method of avoiding further unemployment. It would be desirable even though the railway did not make any money or made less money than usual. In addition there is the question of service to the public to be considered. The T. & N. O. service has been good.

It would be a great pity to spoil this record. In any event the public are entitled to service from the people's own railway, and the service can not be maintained with the reduction of trains and the dropping of staffs. The more the question is studied the more it appears that reduction in service is inevitably followed by loss of profits. People using the railways in the South in recent years are outspoken in their comments upon the poor service, the dirty trains, the old coaches and the lack of comforts and conveniences that used to obtain on the railways. Many believe that the railways simply became panic-stricken at the first touch of reduction in patronage. Instead of fighting the apparent decline by improved service and added attractions, they have increased the trouble by such poor service that sometimes it is surprising that there is any business at all. Especially on long runs buses and trucks can scarcely compete with the service the railway can provide if it will. Instead of meeting the competition of the trucks and buses with a superior service it would seem that the opposite tactics have been pursued with disastrous results. It is sincerely to be hoped for the sake of the North and for the sake of the railway that the T. & N. O. does not intend to follow this short-sighted policy.

### NEW BRIDGE AT COBALT IS DULY OPENED FOR TRAFFIC

Anticipating by one week the formal ceremony planned by the town council at Cobalt, the Northern Development branch on Monday threw open the new Lang street bridge to traffic.

The bridge, which has been under construction for some months past, spans the T. & N. O. main line where the Ferguson highway leaves Cobalt at the northern end of the town.

It is 365 feet in length, and with its erection a dangerous level crossing is eliminated. An official opening is set for Labour Day, and Hon. William Finlayson, Minister of Lands and Forests, is expected to participate in the proceedings.

S. G. Ronaldson and Robt. Bristol, of Toronto, were Timmins visitors last week.

### Other Work Besides Trans-Canada Road

Premier Henry Suggests that Other Public Works are to be Carried on for the Relief of Unemployment in Ontario.

According to despatches from Toronto this week, although no statement regarding Federal approval for the provinces' unemployment relief plans was forthcoming after a meeting at Toronto last week between Hon. George S. Henry, Premier; Hon. William Finlayson, Minister of Lands and Forests of Ontario, and Senator Gideon Robertson, Federal Minister of Labour, the Premier intimated work on the trans-Canada highway would not be the sole relief measure.

A considerable amount of work, already approved by the Federal Government, would be provided through betterment of existing trunk, secondary and settlers roads, he said.

Camp units which are now being prepared in Northern Ontario will not be recruited from one municipality alone, it is understood. The Government, it is believed to be initiating a policy whereby each centre's quota of workers will be distributed among the various trans-Canada camps, with the object of minimizing the danger of disorders.

The majority of Southern Ontario men who go north to do road work will, it is anticipated, have had no experience at that type of labour, and it is hoped unemployed men from Northern Ontario will act as leaders to the uninitiated.

Possible employment of Manitoba men on Ontario sections of the highway would, of course, be subject to the approval of this province, said Premier Henry, commenting on the report from Winnipeg last week that men from that province might be put to work in Ontario.

Everything is now in readiness except some of the organization work, said Mr. Henry, regarding provincial relief plans. Mr. Finlayson will issue a detailed statement of final arrangements this week.

"We swapped ideas with Senator Ro-

### BLUEBIRD TEA ROOM

SOUTH PORCUPINE, ONT.

The Bluebird Tea Room will be closed next Sunday and Monday. It will be opened on Tuesday as usual in the premises immediately next door.

bertson as to how the work should be done," said the Premier, "and he is leaving it largely to us to decide the form of the work."

### IS IT A FACT THAT BAD NEWS IS THE ONLY NEWS FOR SOME?

Some days ago there was some figures published as to the population of towns in Canada according to the 1931 census. These figures showed that both Cobalt and Halleybury had a decrease in population from the 1921 census. Several of the outside newspapers mentioned this fact in their headings and some commented otherwise upon it. Last week further figures were published, and these showed among other things that Timmins had a population of 14,142, according to the 1931 census, while the 1921 census placed the population of this town at 3,843. Did any outside newspaper have a heading "North Land Town Three Times the Size of 1921." No, that you would notice! Did any of the outside newspapers comment on this remarkable growth? Not at all!

A growth in population from 3,843 to 14,142 in ten years seems like news. But it is good news! And who cares?

Cobalt and Halleybury had to take the publicity for a 12 per cent. and a 25 per cent. decrease, respectively. Timmins had an increase of 268 per cent., and it is all right. No news is good news. In passing it may be noted that in all the figures published by the Bureau of Statistics to date in regard to the census, only one other town showed a larger proportion of growth

in the past ten years. That was St. Joseph D'Alma, in Quebec, with a population of 850 in 1921 and 3,953 in 1931.

### THINK KAPUSKASING FIRE TO HAVE BEEN INCENDIARY

In reference to the fire some days ago at the Alexander theatre building in Kapuskasing The Northern Tribune says:—"Deputy Fire Marshal Jordan has returned to Toronto after completing his investigation into the fire at the Alexander theatre on Saturday morning, Aug. 15th. His report, of course, is confidential to his department; but it is understood that incendiary was fairly well established. It has thus far proven difficult to pin the dirty work on any person. The theatre premises are in the meantime in disuse, with the roof in a leaky condition despite some patching. Extensive alterations would be required to put the show house into condition for operation once more, especially as new provincial regulations prescribing a concrete floor and a metallic ceiling are now applicable and must be honoured in the reconstruction. The owners have not yet stated their intentions."

St. Thomas Times-Journal.—That Goderich magistrate who sentenced two 16-year-old boys to three years in the reformatory for burning alive a cat by pouring gasoline over it, were if anything on the side of moderation. They should at least have been flogged soundly.

# TRAINLOAD SALE!

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