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DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR,

SUSTENANCE BRANCH,
GEOLOGICAL MUSEUM BUILDINGS,
GISBORNE STREET,
MELBOURNE, C. 2.

IN REPLY PLEASE

B.102

QUOTE

23rd March, 1934 MT

The Secretary,
Public Assistance Committee,
Town Hall,
Bendigo.

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Hon. the Minister to enclose for your information copy of a communication forwarded to the Secretary of the unemployed Ratepayers' and Citizens Association, Bendigo. The letter practically explains the position and the Minister is very anxious to have your views on the whole matter. As we have decided to look to the Trades Hall in Melbourne as the counsel for men with alleged grievances, it might be necessary to carry out the same practice in respect of Bendigo, but we feel that we should be in a great measure guided by first hand information on all the conditions and this is the reason why the Honorable the Minister is anxious to be favoured with any further information you may desire to give on the matter.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "M. C. G. G.", written over a horizontal line.

Officer in Charge

Dep't of Labour,
Sister Brandy,
MAB. C 2.

23rd March, 1934 MT

F. C. Sweeney, Esq.,
55 Garsed Street,
Bendigo.

See 22/3/ letter

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Hon. Dr. C. Shields, M.L.A., to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 22nd March and to thank you for the information contained therein.

In the first instance the Hon. the Minister desires me to point out that a misunderstanding seems to have arisen in regard to the decision to allow delegates with the leave of the Foreman to place complaints before the Central Unemployed Committee. Such a proposal was never agreed to and you presumably obtained your information from the "Herald" newspaper which made an incorrect statement.

It is not intended under any circumstances to appoint a tribunal as a Board of Appeal in respect of grievances of men employed on work in return for sustenance. In so far as the metropolitan area is concerned, the Honorable the Minister has decided that he will not hear any complaints direct from the men concerned but that all complaints must be brought under his notice by representatives of the Trades Hall Council which will be in a manner an intermediary between the men themselves and this department. The Trades Hall Council will, of course, not have any jurisdiction but be simply regarded as counsel for the men concerned with the responsibility of placing the whole facts of the case before this department for final decision.

Whilst the Honorable the Minister is adamant in his resolve that in the metropolitan area he will recognise only one body, the question of the recognition of an organisation in the provincial and country areas is a matter which will have to receive further consideration. It must be remembered, of course, that the Trades Hall Council of Melbourne acts practically for the whole of Victoria and this is especially true in regard to Bendigo where the local council is affiliated and very closely associated with the central body in Melbourne.

The Honorable the Minister desires to take any action that will assist the men in their appeals and before a final decision may be made in respect of Bendigo, it will be necessary for certain enquiries to be made. This will be done immediately and you will be notified of the final decision of the Honorable the Minister.

Yours faithfully,

Officer in Charge