

*Supply—Justice*

to any person, or intimidation, or to indulge in disorders. In particular, section 366 makes it unlawful to block or obstruct the highways.

The following paragraph I would also like to read:

It will thus be seen that under strike conditions the police are bound to be called upon from time to time—

Bound to be called upon from time to time.

—to perform special duties such, for instance, as to make sure roads are kept open for traffic. Under normal conditions the necessity for such action does not arise, but under strike conditions it is a specific duty they have to perform.

Then on the following page, page 1826, in the first column, the second paragraph—the minister had given some account of what happened, which I do not think is necessary for me to enter—the minister said:

As I have stated, the actions of the police in this very difficult situation have been entirely preventive.

I emphasize again “entirely preventive”. This is the minister in charge of the force speaking. Perhaps I should say the minister responsible for the force.

Their actions have been limited to enforcing the provisions of the Criminal Code against assault, damage to property, acts of violence, obstruction of roads and other similar provisions.

Furthermore, the position of the police as I have described it has been outlined by responsible police officers to the union officials concerned, by whom it has been accepted. In addition the police have been at pains, in all cases where picket lines have been established or where men have gathered on the roads, to explain to them the limits imposed upon their activities by the Criminal Code.

This is the minister giving his account of the way in which the Royal Canadian Mounted Police conducted themselves in central Newfoundland, and as I said before I think the minister gave an entirely accurate statement of what happened.

Then he said a little further on:

Since there have been a number of accusations made against the police which have arisen in the main out of three major incidents, I should give here a factual account of what actually took place on those occasions, because the facts demonstrate most clearly that the police have only acted when the provisions of the Criminal Code have been violated.

The only other paragraph I want to read is the concluding paragraph of the minister's statement in which he said:

I am satisfied from my investigation that there is no foundation for any suggestion that the police have permitted themselves to be used as strike-breakers. I am also satisfied that they have acted strictly within the limits of their duties in connection with the enforcement of the criminal law as these duties are multiplied under the circumstances of a strike. Indeed, it is apparent that the approximately 150 police involved have done a thoroughly

creditable job in their efforts to preserve the peace over a long period under most trying and difficult circumstances.

The house met at 2.30 in the afternoon. The minister's statement was made as the first item of business, so it must have been made not later than 2.40. At the time the statement was made—and the minister may interrupt me at any time if he thinks I am misstating any of the facts—according to the information we have, arrangements had already been made to have reinforcements flown into the maritime provinces for dispatch to Newfoundland if they proved to be required. And some time in the course of that afternoon—certainly some time before 6.00 p.m.—the attorney general acting in his capacity as the officer responsible for the administration of justice and the maintenance of law and order in the province, and acting under the arrangement with the federal government, asked for those reinforcements through the usual and appropriate channels. Whether the minister knew of the arrangements which had been made and whether he knew what arrangements had been made by the commissioner before he made this statement, I do not recall. The minister can speak for himself about that.

But there is every reason to believe that when the minister made that statement he must have been aware, or, at least, he should have been aware, of the fact that every possible physical provision had been made for the reinforcement of the force in central Newfoundland and that no doubt had been expressed to anyone that these reinforcements would be sent if requested. I emphasize that point because of what happened afterwards. We know that before that evening was over—and I am speaking here from recollection—it was announced on the ten o'clock news that the reinforcements were not being sent. I should not say it was announced; it was stated in the news. I do not know the exact sequence of events because I have no responsibility for doing anything but listen and try to find out what the facts were.

But we do know from what has subsequently been brought before us in this house and told us by the minister that some time before the end of that day the attorney general communicated with the minister about what had happened and, not receiving satisfaction from the minister, he then communicated with the premier of the province who in turn communicated with the Prime Minister in a telegram which I have asked the Prime Minister more than once to put on the record. I regret to say that this has never been done until now. The telegram