

not report for work on three shifts yesterday. The government has received no advice that there is a strike in progress; the plant is operating normally, and there is no disturbance in the area. If there is a strike, or if certain employees think they are on strike, of course it is an illegal strike. Absolutely no action will be taken by the government in connection therewith until the employees return to work. A strike in a plant which is handling high explosives is a most dangerous thing. A plant of that type is safe only as long as every employee follows the safety regulations; it becomes very dangerous if there is any carelessness or disturbance such as would arise from a strike. I have made it quite clear to the management that if any disturbance should develop, either in the plant or outside, it will be closed down indefinitely.

### BUTTER

#### QUESTION AS TO UNEVENNESS OF DISTRIBUTION

On the orders of the day:

Hon. R. B. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance as the minister representing the wartime prices and trade board. Has the attention of the board been drawn to a situation which has been represented to me to exist in connection with butter? It is said that in some communities there are large excess supplies of butter while in others there is a stringency in the supply. In other words the situation is spotty. What is the board doing with respect to the distribution of this important commodity? If the minister cannot answer now, I should like him to get the information later.

Hon. J. L. ILSLEY (Minister of Finance): I shall do that.

### MILK

#### REPORTED SHORTAGE IN FLIN FLON

On the orders of the day:

Mr. M. J. COLDWELL (Rosetown-Biggarr): I have just received a telegram from Flin Flon stating that there is a very serious shortage of milk, and that infants are suffering. They report a shortage of other foods and complain of high prices that are being charged, but I am particularly interested in the milk situation. Will the Minister of Agriculture look into this?

Hon. J. G. GARDINER (Minister of Agriculture): I shall make inquiries.

[Mr. Howe.]

### WAR APPROPRIATION BILL

#### REQUEST FOR TABULATION OF EXPENDITURES IN PREVIOUS YEARS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. GORDON GRAYDON (Leader of the Opposition): I should like again to ask the Minister of Finance two questions which I asked him a couple of weeks ago. At that time I suggested that he have prepared a table of expenditures which would facilitate the discussion on the war appropriation bill. He will recall that I suggested that in addition to the break-down of items which he was good enough to have placed on *Hansard* some weeks ago, he should also give us wherever practicable the expenditures during the years in which there has been a war appropriation bill brought down. If this were done we would have a convenient means of checking expenditures which have been made with the estimates now before the house.

Hon. J. L. ILSLEY (Minister of Finance): I spoke to one of the officials about that and he thought the information could be furnished, at least in part. It was my intention to go as far as possible in meeting the request.

Mr. GRAYDON: Can the minister give us any idea when we may have it? It will not be of much use if it is brought down just before the war appropriation bill is to be considered.

Mr. ILSLEY: The war appropriation bill will not be reached until after the Easter recess, I should think. I will get it as soon as I can.

### COAL

#### QUESTION AS TO MEASURES TO PREVENT DECLINE IN PRODUCTION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. F. D. SHAW (Red Deer): I should like to ask the Minister of Munitions and Supply (Mr. Howe) a question which arises from information released by the bureau of statistics indicating a recent sharp decline in the production of coal in Canada. Will the minister make a definite statement to this house at an early day indicating what the government or the government through the emergency coal production board are doing to prevent a decline in the production of coal during this spring and summer?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question should be placed upon the order paper.