

ing details of this affair. That was not necessary; we have read all that in the newspapers, and do not wish to go into it. If conditions were bad, it was the duty of the minister to make them right. The hon. gentleman has not said a word to defend the minister, and I should like to hear any member who would defend him. I should like to find any newspapers that had tried to defend him. I should like to know which of his colleagues will attempt to defend him. The hon. member for Nanaimo will not do so; the minister himself will not attempt it. I think it is up to the minister to give us the true reason why he has allowed this thing to diddle-daddle along the way it has done, why he has maintained a condition of inactivity in the deplorable condition of affairs that we have been told about this afternoon.

Mr. W. A. BUCHANAN (Medicine Hat): I represent a constituency in which there are a large number of coal miners. I know them intimately. And let me say that a feeling has grown up that under the administration of the present Minister of Labour the Department's affairs are not being dealt with seriously. There is a feeling also that the employers have the ear of the minister more than the employees have. I can say for the late Minister of Labour, that, so far as the miners of my constituency are concerned they felt that the Hon. Mackenzie King was anxious to bring about better relations between capital and labour. This does not exist at the present time, but it is felt that the minister now in charge of the department is not anxious to bring about better relations between capital and labour. This very strike in Vancouver Island is an instance of it. It was established here today that no serious efforts, no prolonged efforts, were made by the minister to settle this trouble. I wonder if this has anything to do with the parties who are in control of some of the mines in Vancouver Island. These parties are very intimately in touch with this Government. They have been able to get large subsidies for some of their railroads. Is it possible that they are so much in touch with this Government that they have the ear of the Government in regard to labour disputes in industries in which they are concerned? There is a feeling of this kind among the people of this country. As to the commissioner sent out to investigate, Mr. Samuel Price, of St. Thomas, I have nothing to

say against him personally except that I do not believe he was a man properly qualified to settle this particular trouble. It is true that Mr. Price had something to do with mining in New Ontario, but not in so far as it concerned labour and conditions of labour. There are men in this country who have made a study of the matter; there are men in this country who are familiar with mining conditions and who would probably have been accepted by employers and employees as absolutely fair men. If such a man had been sent to Vancouver Island to look into this matter a solution of the problem would have been brought about. I have before me a letter addressed to the Minister of Labour by Mr. Frank Farrington, who was in charge of the strike, and who represented and directed the forces of the labour unions on Vancouver Island. In this letter, written on December 15, 1913, he makes an assertion which goes to show that Mr. Price did not display evidences of fairness in his efforts to get at the bottom of the trouble on Vancouver Island. I believe it is only fair to the labouring men of this country that the views of their representatives should be placed before Parliament and before the country. Here is what Mr. Farrington has to say about Mr. Price's report:

To those who are familiar with conditions on the island it is clear that the Royal Commissioner has predicated his report upon the unsupported statements of the mine owners and their satellites; and, on the other hand, denied the union men the opportunity of appearing before him in defence of their position or to refute the untrue statements of these hostile agents. In view of my prominent connection with this trouble I should be expected to have much valuable matter to contribute to the investigation, and I have, yet I was given no opportunity to present it to the commissioner. In fact, I never met him but once, and then only informally, during my brief conference with you in Vancouver city the first week in July. I do not mention this because I feel slighted, but because it shows the commissioner was not anxious to have facts. Furthermore, I have made careful inquiry of the district and local officers connected with the strike, and many individuals of influence and activity among the strikers, all of whom unite in declaring they did not have the privilege of appearing before the commissioner, and none of whom were even aware of his visit to the island; which further indicates his desire to escape rather than to find the truth.

Couple his transgression in this respect with his transparent disposition to favour the mine owners and his apparent willingness to accept and include in his report everything, no matter how flimsy, that reflects discredit upon