

Supply—Justice

account you gave of the same incident in the House of Commons on March 11, and with the Prime Minister's statement on March 16 that the government felt that the R.C.M.P. "has performed its duty with fairness and efficiency"; and that to ignore them would not be compatible with the "essential responsibility" to maintain the "full integrity" of the force.

Yours sincerely,

J. W. Pickersgill.

The minister's reply to this letter is dated March 25, 1959 and reads as follows:

Dear Mr. Pickersgill,

I acknowledge with thanks receipt of your letter of March 24 in which you reproduce two reports appearing in the Toronto *Star* concerning the conduct of the R.C.M. Police in Newfoundland, and refer to our exchange in the house in this connection on March 19.

I have already, as you yourself point out, dealt with the incident which the *Star* purports to describe. My report to the house on March 11 set out the true facts then in my possession. In concluding that statement, I pointed out that: "... it is apparent that the . . . police . . . have done a thoroughly creditable job . . . under most trying and difficult circumstances."

You yourself also referred to the Prime Minister's statement on March 16 in which he said that the R.C.M. Police "has performed its duty with fairness and efficiency".

These official statements, outlining the facts and the government's position, one made at the same time as and the other within five days of, the newspaper reports in question had appeared, seem to me to be both a complete defence of the conduct of the police and a refutation of the allegations contained in the newspaper reports.

It is also my view that the allegations have been dealt with the proper forum, namely by government statement to parliament in the House of Commons, and I cannot therefore accept your suggestion that we are ignoring our responsibility to maintain the full integrity of the force.

Yours sincerely,

E. D. Fulton

The minister's reply can be summed up, Mr. Chairman, as saying the Prime Minister and I have both said these statements are not true and, therefore, they are not true. But where is the evidence to support this statement? In view of the fact that not only the premier of Newfoundland but also the Canadian Labour Congress called for an investigation, and in view of the minister's own words, which I repeated earlier, that the character of the duties of the reinforcements would be other than to maintain law and order—

Mr. Fulton: I said that was the character of the request.

Mr. Carter: Well, if the character of the request was such that they were going to do something besides their normal duties of maintaining law and order, then of course the minister himself lends support to the charges made in these newspapers. In my

opinion, Mr. Chairman, some more positive action should be taken in this matter to establish and uphold the good name of the R.C.M. Police and I hope the minister, when he replies, will tell us what steps he proposes to take.

Mr. Peters: I should like to endorse what appears to be a suggestion made by the last speaker when he requested that this matter of the conduct of the R.C.M.P. be investigated by a commission. I feel it is only fair that the minister who is responsible for this department should instigate this type of inquiry. There have been two versions of this story, and the two versions have not been anywhere near the same. I certainly endorse the wish of the previous speaker that this investigation take place.

I should like also to congratulate the minister upon the action taken by the government in regard to this particular situation. I should like to congratulate him upon the fact that the government was unwilling to again put the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the position in which they were in 1919 when they engaged in some of the most brutal and nefarious police work that has been done in Canada, and probably in North America. Then again, during the depression, on numerous occasions the Royal Canadian Mounted Police abused citizens in this country in the course of what was called the protection of property. I have pictures here that indicate that not all members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have become "Canada's finest", such as we see standing out in front of the House of Commons.

Over the years this police force has established a remarkable reputation for criminal investigation and for humanity in the work that they have done. I see again not that type of policeman, not the type of policeman that I know as a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, but strikebreakers, people who are used by organizations for this so-called protection of property, the protection of a way of life. It appears to me that this was the situation in Newfoundland. I should like to read a small article that appeared in the Toronto *Star*, written by Ray Timson, staff correspondent, on March 11, 1959, and which is entitled "Eyewitness". There is a subheading "It Was Dark Hour for Canada's Finest", and then the article goes on:

Marching three abreast and carrying nightsticks, a column of 66 policemen waded into a throng of striking loggers last night, clubbed two of them unconscious, flattened dozens more while wives and children screamed for them to stop.

I watched the attack on mainly defenceless men for about an hour.