

the valuable assistance that Mr. Mackenzie King gave to miners and operators alike in the settlement of their difficulties. This commissioner, at page 8 of his report, referring to the history of labour troubles in the West, said:

Though it has often been a subject of remark that the coal mining industry is more subject than others to labour disputes, Vancouver Island for a considerable time past has been comparatively free from such troubles.

Now, while speaking of the strike in Nova Scotia which my hon. friend the Minister of Labour lengthened out into twenty-two months—which is only an extravagance of between six and eight months—I want to point out that the former Minister of Labour intervened before the strike came on and that a board of conciliation was appointed. Mr. Adam Shortt was chairman of that board. When the miners of Cape Breton were asked to name a representative on that board, they named Mr. McDougall, who was then the president of the United Mine Workers local in the county of Cape Breton. Now, ordinarily, under the act, a Government would not have appointed a person who was directly interested in the strike. But notwithstanding that, Mr. Mackenzie King, who was Minister of Labour, showed to some extent his sympathy with the labouring people of this country by allowing this appointment to go, so that the President of the United Mine Workers' local was a member of this board. And in the recommendation which they brought down they refused to recommend that the United Mine Workers of America should be recognized as a labour organization by the Dominion Coal Company, because that company was already recognizing and doing business with a local organization.

The Minister of Labour says that he had no way by which to intervene further than he did in this British Columbia dispute. He said that neither the operators nor the employees asked for a board of conciliation. I would like to point out, that while that is true, there is another Act on the statute book of this country which would fairly give to the Minister of Labour the right to do more than he did in connection with this strike. I refer to chapter 96 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1906, an Act respecting Conciliation and Labour. This Act has reference to coal miners as well as other trades. Section 11 provides:

If it appears to the minister that in any district or trade adequate means do not exist for having disputes submitted to a conciliation

[Mr. Carroll.]

board for the district or trade, he may appoint any person or persons to inquire into the conditions of the district or trade, and to confer with the employers and employed, and, if he thinks fit, with any local authority or body, as to the expediency of establishing a conciliation board for such district or trade.

The Minister of Labour did not do that. He appointed a commissioner, but that commissioner did not mention in his report the expediency of establishing a conciliation board. I say that is one way in which the Minister of Labour could have intervened in this matter. Then section 6 of this Act seems to have some bearing on this matter:

Where a dispute exists or is apprehended between an employer or any class of employers and workmen, or between different classes of workmen, the minister may, if he thinks fit, exercise all or any of the following powers, namely:

(a) Inquire into the causes and circumstances of the dispute;

(b) Take such steps as to him seem expedient, for the purpose of enabling the parties to the dispute to meet together, by themselves or their representatives, under the presidency of a chairman mutually agreed upon or nominated by him, or by some other person or body, with a view to the amicable settlement of the dispute;

Suppose that under one or both of these sections the Minister of Labour could have done nothing, I wish to point out that during the time the late Administration was in power in this country the Minister of Labour and his friends in this House, then in Opposition, cried out day after day for amendments to the Industrial Disputes Act which would make it a more workable piece of legislation. I am now going to put the matter plainly before the Minister of Labour. This strike still exists in the mining district of the province of British Columbia. Let him introduce as speedily as possible an amendment to the Industrial Disputes Act which will enable his department to appoint a conciliation board, where the disputants may fail or neglect to do so; and let that board investigate the matter and recommend some settlement or arrangement between the parties. Let him include in that amendment a penalty to be attached to the party who refused to be bound by that award. The minister has told this House that under present legislation, he cannot intervene in this way. That strike is still on in British Columbia, and let me tell my hon. friend that I think he will get support for legislation of that kind from every hon. gentleman in this House, if in the estimation of the House it will settle the unfortunate labour troubles that have