

Mr. MACDONALD: Why do you put that in?

Mr. CROTHERS: For the same reason that you put it in the Lord's Day Act.

Mr. PUGSLEY: What was the reason?

Mr. CROTHERS: When you were passing the Lord's Day Act you left it to the discretion of the attorney general of the province whether there should be any prosecution. We thought that principle a very good one, and applied it in this case.

Mr. PUGSLEY: In order to prevent prosecutions.

Mr. CROTHERS: If the replies to the questions indicate that there has been a contravention of the law, we send the evidence to the attorney general of the province, pointing out that we think there has been a contravention of the Order in Council, and it is then up to him to prosecute if he thinks fit.

Mr. MACDONALD: Does my hon. friend think that in passing an Order in Council under the War Measures Act, one of the most plenary Acts ever put on the Statute Book, the Government has fulfilled its duty when it turns over the responsibility of enforcing the law to the provincial and municipal authorities?

Mr. CROTHERS: My hon. friend is wandering again. If my hon. friend thinks that anything wrong has been done under this Order in Council, it is his privilege and right to criticise it in this House, but it is not proper for him to say to me, in discussing this Order in Council, that I should have seen that no recruiting was allowed at a certain mine. That has nothing to do with this Order in Council. But I may tell my hon. friend for his information—for he does not appear to know it—that long, long ago instructions were given to the recruiting officers not to recruit men in these mines, on the ground that these men were needed for carrying on mining. And the recruiting ceased. So, it will be seen, we have anticipated some of these things.

Mr. KYTE: How long ago?

Mr. CROTHERS: I do not remember.

Mr. MACDONALD: Now that my hon. friend has delivered himself of his wonderful knowledge, I desire to pay a tribute of admiration to the gigantic brain that has been working so ponderously on this question of the cost of living. The hon. gentleman said I was incorrect in saying that

he had cast the responsibility of this matter upon the municipalities, and then he went on to prove very completely that what I had said was true. He told us the powers given to the municipalities, and declared his opinion that the Government had fulfilled its duty by declaring that the responsibility of carrying out this order under the War Measures Act should rest upon the Attorneys General of the provinces. If that is the way this Government has taken of exercising the powers given it by this Parliament under the War Measures Act at the inception of the war, it is time this Parliament reviewed the War Measures Act and the provisions made under it. As to the constitutional point involved in this reference to the municipalities, there is not a man sitting behind the hon. minister who is acquainted with legal or constitutional matters who will say that this Government is justified under the provisions of the War Measures Act in getting rid of its responsibility for the enforcement of any part of this law by attempting to throw that responsibility upon some other body. As to this question of recruiting coal miners, the hon. minister's knowledge is singularly limited. He has told us that in November last orders were given that there should be no more recruiting in the coal mines. That is to say, two years and three months after the war began, for the first time the Government interfered—

Mr. CROTHERS: No, long before that.

Mr. MACDONALD: Let me tell the hon. gentleman for his information—and I come from a coal-mining country and know whereof I speak—that the recruiting officers of this Government have been active right along, and are active at this moment, in the coal mines of Nova Scotia, recruiting men for the war. Shall we say that they are ignoring the instructions that were given them? That is only another way of saying that the Government have never dealt practically with the question of arranging to have proper National Service, for the organizing of bodies of men to work as well as bodies of men to fight. The responsibility for the increased cost of living, which is already severely felt by the people of this country, will be placed upon the shoulders of the hon. minister and his associates because of their absolute failure to deal with the question.

Mr. BURNHAM: One statement was made by the hon. member for Pictou (Mr. Macdonald), which, as it appears in cold type, will look very badly and will give a