

Supply—Justice

the situation was. That too is a further reflection on the R.C.M.P. But to come back to the earlier statement of the minister that it was not a request to assist in the normal function and duty of the province in maintaining order, that in itself must mean that the minister considers that the necessity to maintain law and order should not be the controlling factor in his decision but the cause of the situation, the character of the request, and therefore he set himself up as the judge of the situation and came to the conclusion that whatever was happening in Newfoundland was the fault of the provincial government in trying to extinguish a union and, that being the case, it did not matter whether or not law and order were in need of being upheld. There was no obligation to uphold law and order or to protect life and property if the situation was caused by something which did not meet with the approval of the Minister of Justice.

On March 19 my colleague, the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate, asked the minister a question, and I quote now from page 2050 of *Hansard*:

Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Justice. I should like to ask the minister whether in view of his professed concern for the integrity of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police it is his intention to take action against those persons who have made defamatory and libellous statements about the conduct of the police in Newfoundland.

The minister replied:

Mr. Speaker, I shall always of course be concerned about anyone who has made defamatory and libellous statements against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, but the hon. gentleman has not identified the statements to which he refers and I doubt if it would be proper for him to do so on the orders of the day.

The hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate then said:

I should be pleased to furnish the hon. gentleman with the press reports, Mr. Speaker.

Following that exchange in the house my colleague addressed a letter to the Minister of Justice dated March 24, 1959, as follows:

Dear Mr. Fulton:

You will recall that on Thursday last (March 19) I asked you in the House of Commons whether in view of your professed concern for the integrity of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police it was your intention to take action against those persons who had made defamatory and libellous statements about the conduct of the police in Newfoundland and that you replied "I shall always of course be concerned about anyone who has made defamatory and libellous statements against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, but the hon. gentleman has not identified the statements to which he refers and I doubt if it would be proper for him to do so on the orders of the day."

I then indicated that I would furnish you with press reports containing the kind of allegations which I had in mind. Out of the many reports

[Mr. Carter.]

which have appeared in various newspapers, I cite only two, both from the *Toronto Star*.

The *Toronto Star* of March 11, 1959, contained an item which reads as follows:

"Clash Provoked by Police I.W.A. Head Says
Special to the *Star*

Grand Falls, Nfld., March 11—

H. Landon Ladd, president of the striking I.W.A. loggers, has called for a full inquiry by a federally appointed royal commission into yesterday's clash between striking loggers and the R.C.M.P. at Badger.

Calling the incident 'the worst demonstration of police brutality in Canadian history,' he said he based this opinion on interviews he had with dozens of people at the scene, including many who were impartial.

'They all tell exactly the same story,' he said. 'The police went at perfectly peaceful strikers with their clubs swinging.'

The incident was 'a disgraceful affair,' he said, but it clarified a statement made during the week end by attorney general Curtis.

At that time, when all was peaceful on the picket lines at Badger and elsewhere, from out of the blue came a statement from the attorney general passionately pleading with the pickets not to become involved in disorder and violence.

This came at a time when there was no disorder or violence.

This was followed yesterday by the arrival of a trainload of the Newfoundland constabulary, together with large reinforcements of R.C.M.P. These forces were imported into a peaceful central Newfoundland.

He said police in groups of four patrolled 'the peaceful town' of Badger throughout the day.

'They displayed their clubs in an obviously provocative manner in a demonstration of police power,' he went on.

What followed, later in the day, must be laid squarely with the R.C.M.P. and the Newfoundland constabulary, or those under whose orders they were acting.

Eyewitness accounts are in agreement. The men had been on the road. The police ordered them off and they moved to each side. The police then marched between them in two lines, turned and bore down on the men with their clubs swinging in a brutal fashion.

Mr. Ladd said the true story of the incident would shock the people of Newfoundland and the rest of Canada.

'Our union demands that not a stone be left unturned to establish the facts,' he went on.

Nothing less than a royal commission conducting a full inquiry and appointed by the federal government will assure the public of the facts to which they are entitled.

It is most regrettable that a number of persons suffered injuries, but the burden of this must rest with those who provoked the horrible display."

The *Toronto Star* of March 12, 1959, contained an item which reads as follows:

"Charges R.C.M.P. Cloak for Firm to Rush Scabs

Leaders of the two striking Newfoundland logger locals claimed today that R.C.M.P. constables were 'trying to incite a riot' when they charged a group of strikers in Badger Tuesday.

George Stoodley, Grand Falls, and Lawrence Ball, Deer Lake, Nfld., arrived in Toronto to start a countryside tour to gain support for the striking I.W.A. international woodworkers of America.

Mr. Stoodley charged that the R.C.M.P. action was a cloak for Anglo-Newfoundland Development's failure to get loggers into bush camps."

It would appear to me that these statements are completely at variance with the detailed