

*Supply—Labour*

the minister, and of course I have knowledge of what the situation is there. The fact that we are dealing with this item tonight is of no importance. The important thing is that something is being done, despite the fact that on Monday evening the minister was warned it was necessary to make this move. The information he gave to the house was given in response to a question by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. The importance of this matter was brought to his attention quite clearly on Monday evening.

I say this because I am most anxious to see that the thousands who are unemployed in Cape Breton will be entitled to the benefits that are due to them. In addition to that, I should like to remind the minister of the situation in Cape Breton today where the miners of district 26, numbering 7,000 in all, are now idle because of a strike. The miners are idle because the mines cannot be served with the necessary hoppers to carry away the production. I should like the minister at this time to clear up the question of whether or not those who refuse to work at a strikebound plant qualify for unemployment insurance. This question was brought up some time ago. I am quite sure the answer is that a man who refuses to enter a strikebound plant remains entitled to these benefits.

The railway unions are involved in this same dispute because their constitution does not require them to cross over any picket line. They are also, therefore, unemployed and are not aware of the situation in respect of unemployment insurance. These men are honouring their contract and, at the same time, are honouring the idea that no union man shall cross a picket line. I believe these men are qualified to draw unemployment insurance benefits because their contract calls for them to protect life, limb and company property. On this basis, these men have not crossed this picket line so I feel they are qualified to draw unemployment insurance benefits. I hope the minister has brought to the attention of union officials the request I placed before him, and has answered the union officials in that vein.

I would say also that it is fortunate we are able to sit tonight as a result of a change of mind on the part of the members of the N.D.P. who were not willing to sit this morning, but who were willing to sit this evening to deal with this very important question. A change of mind is always good. Yesterday they were unwilling to forgo private members' hour but today, to satisfy the legitimate request of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, they changed their minds and we did deal with government business

[Mr. MacInnis.]

during private members' hour. I would implore the minister to look closely at the situation in Cape Breton and the qualifications of the miners and the railway workers to draw on their unemployment insurance. I ask that everything be done to expedite this matter in their interests.

**Mr. McIlraith:** There is one point arising out of the remarks of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre that I think should be clarified and that is an explanation of the need for the vote in this form. If hon. members will read the item in supplementary estimates (A), they will see it reads as follows:

To authorize the Minister of Finance, notwithstanding the Unemployment Insurance Act, to credit, on such terms and conditions as the governor in council may determine, to the unemployment insurance fund such sums as may from time to time be required by the said fund; the aggregate of the sums outstanding at any one time not to exceed \$55 million.

Now, supplementary estimates (E), which are before us, contain the item we are considering, L27e, which reads as follows:

To authorize the Minister of Finance, notwithstanding the Unemployment Insurance Act, to credit, on such terms and conditions as the governor in council may determine, to the unemployment insurance fund such sums as may from time to time be required by the said fund; the aggregate of the sums outstanding at any one time not to exceed \$55 million—

**Mr. Knowles:** So far, it is the same.

**Mr. McIlraith:** Yes.

—to extend the purposes of vote L27a of the estimates for 1963-64 to cover requirements in the fiscal year 1964-65, \$1.

In other words, the item now before us merely grants authority to the Minister of Finance to credit the fund in the fiscal year, 1964-65. If the original item is looked at, it will be seen that the credit could not have been put in the fund last year for use in April and May of this year. That is the nature of the difficulty.

**Mr. Knowles:** Would the minister point to the words in the vote of last December that limit its use to that fiscal year?

**Mr. McIlraith:** Yes, that will be found in section 2 of the Appropriation Act, and perhaps I could just read part of it:

The total of the amounts of the item set forth in the supplementary estimates (A) for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1964 as contained in schedule B—

And that is less certain amounts authorized by this act, and then I continue quoting farther down:

The amount authorized by this act to be paid or applied in respect of any item may be paid or applied only for the purposes and subject to any terms and conditions specified in the item—