

exempt from military service; in fact, thousands were brought back from the front to work in the mines in England. Through the lack of system on the part of this Government the price of coal has gone up, owing to the scarcity of labour to work the mines. My hon. friend and this Government should have done what the Government of England did; told the men who were supplying the fuel of the people that they were performing a national service. The Government ought to have known that when they permitted recruiting officers to go amongst these hardy and adventurous men, inducing them to enlist, they were creating a situation under which the price of coal was bound to go up and contribute to the high cost of living in this country.

Mr. CROTHERS: The remarks of my hon. friend show that he does not know what was done with regard to recruiting, either. He is talking without knowledge.

Mr. MACDONALD: That statement is absolutely untrue.

Mr. CROTHERS: It just shows that my hon. friend does not know what he is talking about. Let us confine ourselves for a moment to this Order in Council; we will come to the other matter later. My hon. friend says that we have left the enforcement of this law to the various municipalities. There is no truth in that so far as I know. I don't think he has read the Order in Council, and I will send him a copy tomorrow. When he reads it, he will see that the matter is not left to the municipalities altogether.

Mr. MACDONALD: What is left to them?

Mr. CROTHERS: It is left to them to ask such questions as the Minister of Labour might ask touching matters within their own municipality, and if they find out that anything is being done in their municipality in contravention of the law they can proceed to prosecute.

Mr. MACDONALD: Is not that leaving it to them?

Mr. CROTHERS: Would you have this Government inquiring into the cost of milk in Nanaimo, for instance, or on Vancouver Island?

Mr. KYTE: They do it in Australia.

Mr. CROTHERS: They do many things in Australia that we do not do here.

[Mr. Macdonald.]

Mr. PUGSLEY: They do many things there that we ought to do here—build ships for instance.

Mr. CROTHERS: My hon. friend talks a great deal about shipbuilding and Australia is often mentioned. I do not want to say anything derogatory of Australia, but just take this point. It is said that Australia manages labour unions and strikes a great deal better than we do in Canada. Well last year, with their population of 5,000,000 they had 300 strikes, and with our population of 8,000,000 we had only 75, so Australia has got ahead of us in that regard. The government thought it right to empower the municipalities to inquire into conditions in their own municipality, and if the questions asked are not answered according to the Order in Council the municipal authorities may proceed against a delinquent, with the consent of the attorney general of the province. My hon. friend must remember that the Labour Department has to do not only with conditions in one municipality but with matters that effect the country as a whole.

Mr. MACDONALD: What have you done?

Mr. CROTHERS: Does my hon. friend want me to tell him three or four times?

Mr. PUGSLEY: I think the Minister could more easily tell us what he has not done.

Mr. CROTHERS: Yes, because it is so little. What have we done in regard to sugar and coal? We have sent out questionnaires to all the coal dealers in Canada and have received replies under oath, and have checked them up to see whether they were correct.

Mr. KYTE: Has that reduced the cost of these commodities?

Mr. CROTHERS: I am told that it has, in some places. The prices are not so high here as elsewhere. We have also sent out questionnaires to the sugar dealers all over the country, and have received replies under oath. Some of them were not satisfactory, and we repeated our questions. We have also investigated the question of bread.

Mr. MACDONALD: You did not say that before.

Mr. CROTHERS: I mention it now, as bread is very important. As I was saying, the Order in Council provides that no prosecution shall be held without the consent of the attorney general of the province.