

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Starr: I have a supplementary question. What method is being employed by the parties to the dispute to bring about a settlement?

Mr. Nicholson: The best method to be used would be true collective bargaining between the parties.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Bow River): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the Prime Minister how long he intends to allow this matter to carry on before he comes to the conclusion there is a national emergency similar to that created by the railway strike? How long is he prepared to let this matter drag on?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I do not consider the situation in respect of this strike as being the same as that which faced us in the case of the national railway strike.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Labour whether, in view of the fact that both parties to the Air Canada dispute have separately declared their resistance to a meeting and have refused to take the initiative, in these circumstances he would not think it desirable for the Department of Labour to take the initiative to bring these two parties together?

Mr. Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, in view of the public statement that I made on Monday it is my hope that one or both of the parties will approach my department, if they feel we could be of assistance.

Mr. Eric A. Winkler (Grey-Bruce): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Did the minister not answer me the other day in the house that he was prepared to bring the parties to Ottawa to discuss this matter?

Mr. Nicholson: I have no recollection of any such question or answer.

Mr. Winkler: Yes, you did.

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Labour. In view of what he said in answer to my question, that he believes in the process of free collective bargaining, how does he define "free collective bargaining" when the parties are not meeting now?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question is not acceptable. I suggest it is argumentative.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Bow River): A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder whether the Minister of Labour would make this very clear because there seems to be some misunderstanding on the question. Are the parties still meeting? Is mediation going on? If the answer is in the negative it should be made clear in the House of Commons.

Mr. Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, I have no knowledge of any such mediation going on at the present time. I believe the atmosphere is somewhat tense, and is likely to be at least for the next day or two. It is not an atmosphere into which the government should be injected at this time.

Mr. Woolliams: A further supplementary question. In view of the fact that the minister says he has no knowledge of any such proceedings going on at the present time, does he not feel that he has some responsibility to determine the situation and let us have this information as soon as he can?

AIR TRANSPORT**LICENSING OF OTHER AIR CARRIERS DURING STRIKE OF AIR CANADA PERSONNEL**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder whether the Prime Minister is in a position to answer my question of yesterday concerning protests made to him with respect to the action of the Air Transport Board in granting permission to other air lines to service Air Canada routes.

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I was out of my office this morning, and when I returned no such communication had reached me.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Bow River): I have a further supplementary question. Will the Prime Minister consider—he may have done so already—issuing landing permits to other companies giving them the same rights as Air Canada so that Canadians will have an air passenger and express service? I should think the Prime Minister, in view of the emergency, would like to answer that question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.