

Supply—Justice

story completely from the standpoint of those who were actually in the area and affected by the circumstances at the time. The first letter is from Mr. George Hicks of Grand Falls, who is a very fine man, a very highly respected citizen, and I might add a staunch Conservative. He writes the Prime Minister as follows:

Dear Prime Minister,

I have just returned from the funeral of the late Constable Moss, victim of an assault by one of a crowd unlawfully assembled at Badger on Tuesday night. At the time he was engaged with many other R.C.M.P. and police in attempting to disperse this mob.

The funeral was attended by about two hundred and fifty ex-service men, as this young man was a veteran of the Korean war and had been in the police force only six months. It is indeed very sad, and the whole country is deeply shocked. He leaves his mother and stepfather to mourn. His mother has been quite ill for some time, and what effect this will have on her can only be imagined.

You will recall that it was my privilege and honour to introduce you to the people of Grand Falls less than a year ago. We were all so delighted to have you here, and still more so when, shortly after, you became the Prime Minister of all Canada. There was serenity here then. Today, however, we have been caught up in what has been described a civil war, brother against brother, father against son.

All this strife in a community that has known only peace and happiness for more than fifty years is indeed a shock. I dare to say that no one feels this more keenly than I do myself, for I came here as a young school teacher in 1906, taught seven years, spent five of the best years of my life overseas in the first war, came back and worked for the A.N.D. Company for nearly forty years. I have lived in retirement since 1953. I saw these mills built, the town expand, the temples of religion rear their noble fronts and the halls of learning spring up. I have seen this town grow from the wilderness to its present beauty and strength. But, above all, I have seen the close relationship between management and labour.

To see this undermined is sad enough, but to see the happenings distorted in the Canadian newspapers is equally as bad. One would think that the first duty of a newspaper is to ascertain the facts. This seems to have been overlooked.

I would not attempt to say how the I.W.A. came into Newfoundland, but apparently they did get a foothold here, and through various processes reached a point where they were able to talk business with the company. This was previously done by the Newfoundland Lumbermen's Association through the woods labour board.

Negotiations began between the company and the I.W.A., but after some months came to an impasse. Then a strike was called. Since then, various incidents such as destruction of property and assaults on the men working in the camps led up to the deplorable incident already referred to.

We all feel here that the stand taken by the government, and supported by the opposition, was courageous and necessary. It was considered an emergency; they closed their ranks and took action, as any country would do in a similar situation where the public interest was in peril.

There may be some doubt in the minds of mainland Canadians that there is a rift in public opinion here over this matter, but I should like to assure you from every indication to hand that

[Mr. Granger.]

this is not the case. Politics has not entered into the question. It is, as stated, an emergency; the public safety has been threatened and the people throughout the province seem to be as one in support of the action taken by the government and the opposition after their appraisal of the situation.

As indicated—

The Deputy Chairman: I am wondering how the hon. member is going to make this relevant to this particular item. I was hoping he would do so, and that is why I gave him a little leeway.

Mr. Pickersgill: If I may say a word about that, this is a return made by the Prime Minister to a motion asking for letters that protested the action of the government with respect to the R.C.M.P., and if the Prime Minister considered that this was a relevant item in making that return it is surely relevant to a discussion of the R.C.M.P.

The Deputy Chairman: We are discussing the administration of the R.C.M.P. and, as I say, I should like to know how this is related to it.

Mr. Fulton: I was also asked to make a similar return. A number of letters discussing the situation generally were of considerable length, and contained, perhaps only one paragraph about the failure to send R.C.M.P. reinforcements, but I felt bound to produce such letters. I would certainly take the position that the discussion of a letter of this sort would not be relevant to a debate on this administrative item.

The Deputy Chairman: Perhaps the hon. member will pick out the parts of the letter which are related to this item.

Mr. Granger: I should be happy to do that, but in fairness to the man who wrote this letter I did not want to read anything out of context. He goes on:

As indicated in my telegram to you, the ex-service men in this area have unanimously volunteered their services to protect life and limb, should that be necessary, but this does not in any way excuse the federal government from withholding adequate police protection, as indicated by their reluctance to send forward the detachment requested by the provincial government. We all feel this to be quite wrong, and would seem to indicate that pressure has been brought to bear by sources unfriendly to this country.

And here I conclude my quotation from Mr. Hicks:

The R.C.M.P. and local police did a fine job here, and they deserve great credit for their forbearance in a most difficult situation.

That letter is signed "Yours faithfully, George Hicks". Mr. Chairman, I shall endeavour to follow your ruling in reading from this letter by Mrs. Yolande Johnston. She writes: