

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

On January 9 I wired in reply pointing out that there is a provision and a specific procedure established under the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act whereby disputes relating to representation and bargaining rights may be disposed of by application to the Canada labour relations board. I pointed out in this telegram that it has not been customary nor is it contemplated by the act that the Minister of Labour should intervene in representational disputes in view of the provisions of the act.

I received a further wire from Mr. Marchand regretting my unwillingness to intervene in this dispute and suggesting that my refusal to intervene was tantamount to supporting the position of the C.B.C., and again urging my intervention. I wired Mr. Marchand in reply under date of January 12 as follows:

Reference your telegram January tenth the Department of Labour has taken no position nor given any advice to either the C.B.C. or the producers as to the status of the producers as employees under the act as this is a matter which in event of dispute can only be determined by reference to the Canada labour relations board. The department has however advised the producers and those interested on their behalf that the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act provides a specific procedure whereby a union claiming to represent a majority of employees for collective bargaining purposes may make application to the Canada labour relations board to establish the appropriateness of the bargaining unit and its authority to bargain for employees in such unit. The decision of the board is final. You are fully aware of the provisions of the act and I would assume that you have advised accordingly. I am always prepared to intervene in a dispute where I can be of service to the parties to assist in settlement but I am not in a position to intervene in representation disputes to resolve representation rights for collective bargaining purposes under the act.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, this reply fully explains the status and gives the reasons why it would not be proper for me to intervene in this dispute. There is very little I can add at this time, except to say that the producers association and the producers have resorted to strike action to resolve a dispute on employee status and bargaining rights in place of taking action to resolve these issues in the manner provided for in the act, namely by application and reference to the Canada labour relations board. In other words, these parties are seeking to short-cut or ignore the provisions of the legislation designed for the final disposition of disputes dealing with representation.

*(Translation):*

**Mr. Chevrier:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. minister for the answer he just gave me. I listened carefully to what he had to say, particularly when he quoted the telegram to which he had referred earlier.

[Mr. Starr.]

Of course, I am not entitled to make any comments; however I would like to ask the minister a supplementary question.

In view of the answer he just gave me, why did he not take action under section 56 of the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act which authorizes him to do so on his own account, or on the request of the union, in order to settle this industrial dispute?

*(Text):*

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, may I be allowed to say that I have listened to the translations passing back and forth as a result of the introduction of this simultaneous translation system, and I must say it is operating exceptionally well. I did not rise to say that but I thought I should say it, in view of the fact that this is the first opportunity I have had to listen to the translation. The degree to which the translation follows the uttered word is really remarkable.

**Mr. Starr:** Mr. Speaker, in answer to the supplementary question asked by the hon. member for Laurier (Mr. Chevrier), may I point out that section 56 of the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act provides for the appointment of a commissioner of inquiry into labour disputes and that means, sir, where there is a dispute between the employees and the employer on the basis of a collective agreement which deals with wages and other similar matters, upon which a decision has not been arrived at. This is not a dispute of that kind at all. It is a matter of representation that is in dispute. There is no working agreement. All those producers have been on individual contracts to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

*(Translation):*

[Later:]

**Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of National Revenue, Mr. Nowlan, who is responsible to the house for the C.B.C.

Has the minister authorized the recall to work of C.B.C. producers and other employees, over the network of the corporation, at the very moment when the parties concerned were still negotiating in the C.B.C. building in Montreal?

*(Text):*

**Hon. George C. Nowlan (Minister of National Revenue):** Mr. Speaker, the minister has taken no action whatsoever with respect to this strike. It is a matter of administration. All the negotiations are in the hands of the responsible officers of the corporation and the executive committee of the board of