

Minister of Labour he sent out certain advice to the men employed in the building trades. I have not observed that since he gave that advice he has done anything; nor have I observed, notwithstanding all the other advice which he has been scattering about gratuitously, that he has anything of what he himself calls practical to his credit. Now, I may be entirely misjudging the honourable gentleman—and, as I say, I do not want to be unfair to him under the circumstances; but I do want to urge upon him and upon the Government the very great importance of endeavouring to the utmost of their power to bring about a settlement of these grave questions in the island of Cape Breton.

It appears—if I may be allowed to refer to another aspect of this matter—that, after coming back to Ottawa, the honourable Minister of Labour learned that a document had been issued by an old-time friend of his, a colleague in labour matters, a gentleman with whom he had collaborated on previous occasions before he assumed the duties of Minister of Labour, a gentleman with whose mentality I am sure he must have been very closely in touch and must have well understood. I refer to a gentleman of the name of McLachlan, who occupied the position of secretary of the mine workers' organization in Cape Breton. The document called upon the miners of Cape Breton to enter upon a class warfare against the company. The intention of that class warfare, as I understand the document, was that the employees should loaf upon the work and thereby reduce the profits of the company in the hope that they would thus compel the company to a settlement. That is commonly called sabotage. With that declaration of Mr. McLachlan, I want to say, I am entirely out of sympathy, as I believe all well-thinking people are. I would not be understood for a moment as approving of any such proceeding; nor do I believe that the better-thinking men who are engaged in the mines of Nova Scotia consider it a wise or defensible policy. However, conditions have become so bad down there that apparently for the time being Mr. McLachlan is receiving considerable support.

Hon. Mr. DAVID: Does the honourable member know if the miners have followed the advice which was given them to limit production in order to attain their object?

Hon. Mr. TANNER: I cannot tell my honourable friend with certainty, but I

believe that the proposal received a good deal of sympathy in the way of discussion. Whether the employees have actually entered upon the operation or not I am really unable to say at his moment.

I was going to say that the Minister of Labour, observing this document, at once entered into a telegraphic duel with Mr. McLachlan. I am at a loss to understand why the Minister of Labour did not go down to Cape Breton. Surely this was a matter of sufficient importance to demand his presence, or at least the presence of some of his leading officials. An election of a member of the Government out at the Pacific coast was of sufficient importance to call him all the way across the continent. Surely, then, when ten thousand men and their families were threatened with stoppage of work, with the coal mines of Nova Scotia tied up and the Government of that province prevented from receiving its revenue—surely all these things were of sufficient importance to have called the Minister down to that part of Canada. Apparently he did not want to go, and there may be reasons why he did not want to go. Perhaps he did not feel inclined to face his old confrere Mr. McLachlan. At any rate he sent a long telegram—I am not going to weary the House by reading it, though I have it under my hand—in which he protested against any such un-British practice as that which Mr. McLachlan was advocating. Perhaps I might read a paragraph of it, for it is rather interesting in connection with what I want to say. The telegram is a lengthy one. The Minister might have travelled down to Cape Breton at less expense, I fancy, than the cost of this telegram. This is what the Minister said:

You will, I think, on reflection, agree with me that any strength which organized labour possesses at the present time is the result, not of the underhanded and dishonest methods of undercutting, or, as it is sometimes called, sabotage, but of straight and honest dealings, each worker giving the best that is in him for the wages agreed upon.

With that sentiment I am in entire agreement. But is Mr. McLachlan in agreement? Without reading the whole of Mr. McLachlan's statement, I want to give honourable gentlemen the substance of what Mr. McLachlan said in reply to the Minister of Labour. This is a telegram, too. Mr. McLachlan also seems to be well supplied with funds to pay for such lengthy wires: