

Mr. CROTHERS: Yes. Originally fair wage officers were appointed for the purpose of ascertaining what a fair wage would be to pay to workmen engaged on public work. That is why they are called fair wage officers. There has not been very much done in the way of public work during the last two or three years. We have no man now especially for the Maritime Provinces. We appointed one after the death of Mr. Dubreuil, but he resigned. Some one said the other night that he had been dismissed. Mr. Arcand was not dismissed at all. I had a letter of resignation from him in which he told me why he had resigned. It was on account of some domestic difficulty that it would not be proper for me to detail here.

Mr. COPP: With reference to the long lecture which my hon. friend the Minister of Labour has given to my hon. friend from Saskatoon (Mr. McCraney) in regard to the manner in which he has received information about labour troubles in different parts of Canada, I may say that I have always got information from sources where the men are themselves, and I have always found it just as credible as could be got from any other source.

One of the very best sources of information in regard to labour trouble must surely be the labourers themselves; from them it is possible to obtain first-hand information. I understand that the hon. member for Saskatoon (Mr. McCraney) got his information first-hand in that manner. The Minister of Labour attempts to say to him that he should not accept information from the labourers themselves, but must go to some official of the Labour Department and find out the facts in regard to the labour organizations or labour troubles in his town. I can say to the Minister of Labour, and I say it without offering criticism at all, that I have had many labour men in whom I have had the greatest confidence and whom I see employed in work in various parts of the Maritime Provinces, tell me that they do not get proper treatment or attention when application is made to the Minister of Labour. I do not know any better source of information than the men themselves in regard to such matters. My hon. friend thinks it is conclusive testimony to read a letter from some official of a labour organization whom he has visited in the West; he advances that as a positive assurance that everything is well in the Labour Department, and suggests that the hon. member for Saskatoon has simply come here

and worked up out of his fertile brain some matters of trouble or complaint by the labourers in his portion of Canada.

Mr. CROTHERS: Would my hon. friend give me a number of cases in his neighbourhood where they complain about delays in the establishment of boards of conciliation?

Mr. COPP: I could give my hon. friend privately many cases such as I referred to.

Mr. CROTHERS: Well, give me one.

Mr. COPP: I will give my hon. friend cases if he will give me an opportunity of doing it privately.

Mr. CROTHERS: Oh, privately, oh, oh.

Mr. COPP: My hon. friend laughs about that. Let me say at the outset that I am not here to criticise the department beyond saying that the labourers themselves in many instances complained to me that they were not able to get fair treatment, that the Minister of Labour did not seem to take any interest in his department in connection with matters of this kind, and that they had appealed to him and appealed in vain—they knocked at the door but the door was not opened. I have been informed that resolutions were passed to the effect that the Minister of Labour should not be a professional man but should be a labouring labour man himself, one who understood the labour question, and that a gentleman of the same profession and calling that I have the honour to belong to myself was not really able to sympathize fully with the labour element. I think that under those conditions my hon. friend from Saskatoon resorted to the best source of information when he went to the Trades and Labour Council. I think he is doing only right and justice to the ordinary labour men when he draws the attention of the Minister of Labour to conditions in his constituency, as a representative from that portion of Canada.

Mr. CROTHERS: I have no doubt that the man who was telling my hon. friend the sort of man who ought to be at the head of the Labour Department was perfectly satisfied with a labouring man like my hon. friend from Rouville (Mr. Lemieux) as Minister of Labour.

Mr. COPP: No, he was not satisfied with a gentleman like the hon. member from Rouville (Mr. Lemieux).