

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Leader of the Opposition is advising the government that we should have avoided the strike by accepting the demands of the union.

Mr. Stanfield: I should like to feel assured that the Minister of Labour would be at hand to take charge of this difficult situation.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, on the same subject I should like to ask the Prime Minister the following question. In view of his statement yesterday that Air Canada was an independent crown corporation and that the government should not intervene in the negotiations, would the right hon. gentleman inform the house whether his question today, whether we—namely the government—should accept the union demands, and his statement yesterday coming down straightforwardly on management's side, is intended to assist in the settlement of the dispute, and whether he or some part of his government will try to get the parties together this week end to negotiate freely, as he suggested yesterday they should?

Mr. Trudeau: I suppose, Mr. Speaker, my answer was of the nature of the question by the leader of the New Democratic party. I think neither was intended to assist in solving the dispute. The dispute will be solved, if at all, by the parties negotiating directly.

What was the latter part of the question?

Mr. Lewis: Yesterday the Prime Minister placed himself directly on management's side in this particular dispute by saying that management had been very generous and that the government would not have been as generous. I am asking the Prime Minister whether he thinks that this kind of statement by the government—should accept the union demands, crown corporation can be helpful in settling the dispute; or will the government take the completely neutral position that it ought to be taking and get the parties together to settle this dispute themselves.

Mr. Trudeau: The government is taking a completely neutral position, Mr. Speaker.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Prime Minister. Has the government considered bringing in legislation similar to that now being brought in by the Labour government in the British House of Commons which will have the effect of preserving and protecting the public interest

[Mr. Stanfield.]

against strikes that embarrass and stifle the economy. I am sure if the government does that my hon. friends to the left will support its action, and I make this suggestion in that spirit.

Mr. Trudeau: As the right hon. gentleman knows, the task force has made certain recommendations in the area of strikes and services essential to the public. These recommendations are being examined by the government.

Mr. Diefenbaker: May I direct another question to the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker. Because of the detrimental potential of strikes such as these would the Prime Minister consider bringing together in a strictly neutral attitude, which he advised the house today he has, representatives of the corporation and the unions and use the prestige of his office to prevent what would be a serious and catastrophic matter involving the welfare of the entire country?

Mr. Trudeau: No, Mr. Speaker. I have not considered that.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): In view of the absence of the Minister of Labour, I ask the minister if he would consider calling upon the services of the Minister of Communications (Mr. Kierans) whose tact and skill in labour negotiations are now receiving national recognition?

LABOUR RELATIONS**REQUEST FOR TASK FORCE REPORT ON PUBLIC INTEREST DISPUTES**

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I should also like to ask the Prime Minister whether the government has given consideration to and reached any decision in connection with the recommendation of the task force on labour relations with regard to the establishment of a public interest disputes commission, dealing as it does with this type of problem.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the recommendations of the task force are being considered by the government.

AIR TRANSPORT**EXTENSION TO ATLANTIC PROVINCES OF CANADIAN PACIFIC AIRLINES FRANCHISE—SERVICE DURING AIR CANADA STRIKE**

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Transport, or perhaps I should address it to