

Canadian Pacific Railway

Hon. HUMPHREY MITCHELL (Minister of Labour): The hon. member was good enough to give me notice of the question this morning. I would remind him that on August 30, 1946, as reported at page 5713 of *Hansard*, I stated:

The matter is being given consideration by the law officers of the crown and the decision has been reached that the appointment of a royal commission would serve no useful purpose.

At the time I made this statement the hon. member reiterated his belief that the appointment of a royal commission would be beneficial and desirable. Since the discussion in the House of Commons on August 30, 1946, I have conferred with officials of the department and my colleagues, and the opinion is held by all that no settlement could be reached by the appointment of a royal commission, nor would a commission be able to bring out any more facts than those which are already known.

Mr. A. L. SMITH (Calgary West): May I ask the Minister of Labour a question supplementary to that asked by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre? Has the minister no suggestion about finding some sort of justice for those people who were over forty years of age when the Winnipeg strike ended and were denied pensions for that reason? I think the hon. member has that in mind. To say that a royal commission will not be appointed does not help us very much. Has he no suggestion to offer as to getting justice for these people?

Mr. MITCHELL: The answer is simple. The money does not belong to the government to begin with. As both my hon. friend and the member for Winnipeg North Centre know, this money is the property of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

Mr. KNOWLES: We don't agree.

Mr. MITCHELL: You don't agree with anything.

Mr. KNOWLES: It is easy to see you agree with the C.P.R.

Mr. MITCHELL: It is the property of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, and at the time no contribution, I understand, was made by the employees to the insurance fund. Let me say—

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): You are wrong about that.

Mr. MITCHELL: Let me say to my hon. friend—

Mr. KNOWLES: He is always wrong.

Mr. Mitchell: Just wait a minute.

[Mr. Knowles.]

Mr. KNOWLES: We have been waiting twenty-eight years.

Mr. MITCHELL: You weren't in Canada twenty-eight years ago.

Mr. KNOWLES: Wrong again.

Mr. MITCHELL: Let me say to my hon. friend the member for Calgary West and also to the member for Winnipeg North Centre that other than themselves no one is more anxious than I am to see justice done in this regard, but I have never been in the position of spending the other fellow's money. I like to spend my own. I think it is a question which should be discussed between the labour organizations themselves and the railway concerned. I think that is sound and sensible, and to try to make a political question out of it does not render any service—

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): Don't say that.

Mr. MITCHELL: Let me finish.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): Perhaps you had better.

Mr. MITCHELL: I am not accusing either of my hon. friends of so doing, but I think that is the proper procedure to adopt.

Mr. KNOWLES: Has the minister read the Johnstone report on the very points he has discussed? Mr. Johnstone takes the very opposite view.

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The house resumed from Friday, January 31, consideration of the motion of Mr. J. W. MacNaught for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session.

Mr. JOHN BRACKEN (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in resuming this debate I want my first word to be one of welcome to the new members. I hope they will find, as I have found, that their association with the members of the House of Commons will be pleasant, profitable and useful. I have always found that this is a splendid group with which to be associated. I might say to the new members that they will find some peculiar political philosophies in some sections of the house, particularly to the right of the Speaker; but otherwise they will find all these men splendid gentlemen.

My second word must be one of welcome to the old members. I want to thank each one of the them in all parties for the pleasant