

Supply—Justice

as to take whatever credit and whatever pleasure they may occasionally get out of the glamour of it.

That is the tradition and the record of this force. That is why people respect it so highly, because it does not shirk unpleasant duties. The people of Canada know that they can rely on the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to carry out the unpleasant with the pleasant, not expecting any reward, not expecting any flattery or congratulations. However, I think they are entitled to ask that the people of Canada, particularly the members of this house, maintain a sense of proportion as to how a constable should go about discharging his duties.

Mr. Peters: The minister spoke about a sense of proportion. At six o'clock in the evening, the supper hour, 66 policemen marched into a number of strikers standing along the road where no workers would be going to work, where no strike breakers would be trying to pass through the picket line, either going or coming. It was at the supper hour, at least an hour after the shift would be over. Would he consider it to be all right for 66 policemen to march through that group of men or would he consider it to be provocation?

I would suggest to the minister it hinges pretty well on whether he is being honest with the members from Newfoundland who have a different opinion from mine. If he says he does not think it is provocation, then what he should have sent to Newfoundland is 3,000 or 4,000 more policemen to intimidate the strikers. If he does, 66 are too many to be enforcing law when there is no question of any violence, except perhaps violence against themselves. You cannot have it both ways. Either you believe that 66 policemen would be too many and would be provoking and looking for trouble rather than preventing it, or if it is not, maybe we should have a lot more policemen down there to intimidate the I.W.A. off the island.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Chairman, I assume my hon. friend is speaking of the Badger incident; I think he is from what he said. If he is, the information he has and my information are poles apart, because my information, which has been checked, is that it was not a case of 66 policemen moving in in the absence of provocation to a peaceful group who were isolated from any scenes of disorder. What actually took place was that on two previous occasions shortly before in that very area there had been blocking of roads and damage to property, to a vehicle which attempted to pass that way. Then tempers had been consistently mounting, and as a climax a large group of persons gathered

at a road intersection, a Y, a busy road and the very road upon which it was expected there would be further movements of vehicles that night. So that the background sketched by my hon. friend is very far removed from the factual background. The police went in as a body, it is true, as sensible policemen would. Their first attempt, I am informed, and I accept it absolutely because this is the proper method to pursue, was to persuade the men to disperse peacefully. Unfortunately the men refused to accept that request, and later to comply with that order, and violence broke out. But the background the hon. gentleman has sketched is, I fear, very inaccurate.

Mr. Granger: Mr. Chairman, most of the trouble under discussion which occurred last winter was in my district, and I would like to participate briefly in this debate regarding the refusal of R.C.M.P. reinforcements. I think first I should say that I have no intention whatsoever of discussing the contractual relationship of the R.C.M.P. and the government of Newfoundland. That matter is in the courts, and apart from that it has no bearing on the aspect of the matter which I wish to discuss.

There has been so much distortion, distortion such as evidenced in the newspaper article read by the hon. member for Timiskaming, and so much speculation and prejudicial statements made regarding what happened in Newfoundland that I think something in the nature of a narrative of the circumstances surrounding the request for R.C.M.P. support and the refusal of it should be given. Also I think I should say that regardless of what criticisms may have been made, everything which I know and have heard points to the fact that the R.C.M.P. was a completely impartial and courageous body. Certainly it was known that there was serious trouble in Newfoundland, that there was rioting, that men partly clothed had been thrown out of woods camp during freezing weather. Many people felt they were being intimidated; there was a general feeling of uneasiness with the threat of rioting continuously in the air. Also there were many neutral people who felt that their very lives and properties were endangered even as their peace was. Therefore I think perhaps I can do no better than to let these people speak for themselves.

Recently in this house there were tabled communications to the Prime Minister from those who opposed the decision of the government in not sending reinforcements to the R.C.M.P. in Newfoundland, and I would like to read two of the letters and two of the telegrams, because I think they tell the