

of criticism, that there is a good deal more fairness on the part of the public at large than I sometimes find among my own confreres in this chamber. It is because of the way in which people speak to me about the selective service problem, that I have, myself, been less inclined to anger sometimes when I have found something wrong.

After all, I do not think anyone will deny that the country generally has turned in a really good performance among the nations of the world over these war years; and, certainly, that could not have occurred if there had been quite such a man-power muddle as asserted by these various journals.

In the second place, I suggest that a person should be more restrained in criticism, because I have very deeply within me the impression that there is hardly anyone in this chamber, and very few people connected with the government at all, who at some stage or another have not made requests that such and such a regulation be not enforced with respect to so-and-so. I have not yet spoken to anyone who did not admit that at some stage he had approached the department and had asked either that John Doe be not pushed somewhere, or that he should be put somewhere, or that some sort of favour should be given.

Every person seems to want a variation in the rules and regulations to fit a particular case in which he has some interest, and of course all that sort of thing adds to the difficulties of the work. I do not doubt that a very large number of us would be willing to plead guilty to having requested some sort of favour which, added to all the others which have been sought, makes for a greater difficulty in this department's work. I have even been informed—not by someone in the department—that the government's chief critic in Canada, the *Globe and Mail* of Toronto, has actually asked for some such favours.

Now may I lay before the minister some facts that have been presented to me by persons who are keenly interested in the problem of coal mining. There are a number of western mines that have their offices in the Winnipeg area, and whenever I am in touch with people connected with this business, they naturally speak of their difficulties. I have in my hand a memorandum on the matter, but I shall not read it in its entirety, for that is hardly necessary. The memorandum refers to a pretty fair sized mine in the Edmonton neighbourhood. I would not be interested in giving the facts about this mine if it were just a particular case, but it is by reason of the fact that I have been assured—

Mr. MITCHELL: What is the date of the memorandum?

[Mr. Maybank.]

Mr. MAYBANK: It is dated a month or two back. I would not be making any remark about this at all, were it not for the fact that I have been assured, both by the person who gave it to me and by several others, that it is a typical case. Again, my reason for mentioning it is chiefly to lay before the ministry a suggestion which it contains and to make one other that has occurred to me.

The maker of the memorandum is telling me about a certain mine—I do not suppose one would call it a large mine—where there are fifty-seven miners and fifty-four non-miners. In the first place I would mention his statement relating to absenteeism over a two-week period. Over a two-week period we find that out of fifty-three miners there were sixteen who worked fourteen shifts; ten that missed one shift; seven that missed two; four that missed three; three that missed four; one that missed five; two that missed six; three that missed seven; three that missed eight; one that missed ten; two that missed eleven, and one that missed twelve.

Of course the question of absenteeism is not directly a matter of man-placement in the sense that it is dealt with in selective service, but there at any rate is a problem facing this particular industry, and the reason that most people give for absenteeism is one that would have to be dealt with, not so much by the Minister of Labour, as by the Minister of Finance and his faithful colleague, the man who collects the money for him, the Minister of National Revenue. At any rate most of the people who lose a number of shifts say that they are missing them because they do not actually get the money after they earn it. That is, it is an income tax problem. I do not know personally how true that is; but there would appear to be something in it. I find already about the country a certain amount of tax evasion is going on, and in some places there is a refusal to earn income because taxes are so heavy. Undoubtedly, in spite of the esprit de corps in the country, that sort of thing is going on. But whether or not that is the real explanation of the type of absenteeism mentioned here, I cannot say with certainty. It does seem to me, however, to play some part.

My informant recites a great many other difficulties in connection with mining operations, besides absenteeism, pointing out that in order to have fifty-three miners at work there have been employed, over the year, no less than 230 men; and that, at the end of the last winter season there was a straight personnel loss of thirty per cent. After detailing such difficulties, and giving the figures on absenteeism which I have mentioned, he