

to meet a committee of men. The men decided to take a holiday, after which the company gave orders for men to take their tools out of the mines.

J. J. McAllister.

The men have always contended that they did not go on strike, that they quit work for a holiday, and that the employers locked them out. The employers have always denied that, and they told me personally that the whistle blew every morning for thirty days, calling the men to come back to work, but the men refused. The owners of the mines then proceeded to have the mines operated by others, and they succeeded in getting men to go from different places to Cumberland.

Mr. MACDONALD: Neither party applied for a board?

Mr. CROTHERS: No.

Mr. MURPHY: The men contended that they had not gone out on strike?

Mr. CROTHERS: The men contended that they had not gone out on strike; that they were only taking a holiday. There are seven mines at Cumberland operated by the Canadian Colliery Company, and one at a place called Extension, about sixty miles south of Cumberland. The owners of the mine proceeded to secure other miners to take the places of those who had gone out on strike, as the owners claimed. They got them from different places. They sent a man to England to secure some miners from there; they got some miners from Edmonton and other places. They gradually increased the number of men at work in their mines. Some of those who had quit work returned, and by the first of May, 1913, with these men that they had secured in place of those who had quit work, they were putting out about 60 per cent of the normal output of the mines. The vice-president of the United Mine Workers of America, whose headquarters are at Seattle, gave instructions to the officer of the district to call out all the mine workers in Vancouver Island, not simply those who had been employed in the Canadian Colliery Company, but all the Mine Workers in Vancouver Island.

Mr. MACDONALD: In British Columbia?

Mr. CROTHERS: No, in Vancouver Island. It did not apply to the Crow'snest or to the eastern part of British Columbia.

[Mr. Crothers.]

Mr. CARVELL: Did the Government have notice of the intended strike before it actually occurred?

Mr. CROTHERS: No, the first notice I had of it was in a press despatch in an Ottawa paper saying that fifteen hundred men had gone on strike the day before.

Mr. CARVELL: I do not think the hon. minister understands my question. Did the department have notice of the general strike that was called on or about the first of May, before it actually happened?

Mr. CROTHERS: No, we had no notice of that either. On that call all the mine workers in Vancouver Island quit work. At the mines of the Western Coal Company, the Pacific Coast Company and at Jinglepot mines, the men all quit work about the first of May.

We had an officer at Vancouver, and he was instructed to go to Vancouver Island and to do everything possible to induce either the men or the owners to apply for a board. Under the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act we have no power to establish a board without application first being made therefor either by the men or by the mine owners. Our officer was instructed, if the union miners or the owners would not apply for a board, to see if he could induce the non-union men to do so, because we were very anxious to have a board established. He was not able to induce any of them, and in that way we are not able to get an investigation by a board under the Industrial Disputes Act.

In order that the facts of the case might be brought to the attention of the public, the Government appointed a commissioner in the person of Mr. Samuel Price of St. Thomas, who had served as Mining Commissioner for the province of Ontario for seven or eight years and who was familiar with such matters.

Mr. CARVELL: What was the date of that appointment?

Mr. CROTHERS: June 27, 1913.

I regarded the matter as a very serious one and was anxious to ascertain the facts at first hand. Therefore I went to Vancouver myself and spent about half the month of July there. I interviewed the different mine owners and the leaders of the mine workers. I was perfectly satisfied that there was no possibility of securing any adjustment between the mine owners and the mine workers. On the one hand, the mine owners seemed unalterably deter-