

Mr. MITCHELL: That is an issue in dispute.

Mr. HOMUTH: It is not the paramount issue?

Mr. MITCHELL: I would say that the paramount issues are the union shop and the check-off.

Mr. COLDWELL: In view of the minister's statement that if this dispute is not settled soon the men may be out and the plant closed for the winter, what further step does the minister propose? Something must be done. What about appointing a controller, bringing the parties together, and operating the plant pending a settlement? It seems to me this matter is so serious that some further step is necessary.

Mr. POULIOT: No controller could do better than the minister.

Mr. MITCHELL: I can only say to the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggarr that if he has the answer, God bless him.

Mr. COLDWELL: The question was not asked in that spirit.

Mr. MITCHELL: No, but I am sincere. I did not interrupt my hon. friend.

Mr. COLDWELL: It was a very sarcastic remark, though.

Mr. MITCHELL: I say, if he has got the answer, God bless him. I have had very little sleep in the last few days. We have had engaged in this matter the best people that I know of in the dominion, good Canadians, who have endeavoured to bring this dispute to a successful conclusion. There was Mr. Justice O'Connor of Edmonton, a man of liberal outlook. There was Mr. Justice Richards, of Winnipeg, one of the ablest conciliators in Canada. We have had our own officials, and I myself have had some experience in these matters. But there must be a willingness to come together and talk. After all is said and done, that is the genius of the British people; it is the very principle on which this House of Commons depends. If we want a system of government which we have spent millions of lives to get rid of in the world—

Mr. COLDWELL: What about Ford? Ford spent millions of dollars and was decorated by Hitler.

Mr. MITCHELL: If my hon. friend wants a frank answer—

Mr. HOMUTH: Send him down there to run the plant, and see what they do then.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. MITCHELL: I want to say this—

Mr. HOMUTH: Let him settle the coal strike in Great Britain and the dock workers' strike in Great Britain.

Mr. MITCHELL: I say that if any hon. member has a formula by which this problem may be solved, the door is always open and I am ready to put it forward. I cannot say anything more sensible or sincere than that.

Mr. McIVOR: I would like to ask a question dealing with practical needs. I was wondering who was going to supply the necessities of life for these workers. Will it be the union officials? Will it be the province of Ontario? Will it be the dominion government? Will it be the city of Windsor? Because the workers have to eat, and they have no right, so far as I can see, to go into debt to keep their bread baskets supplied. I would like to know who is going to be responsible.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would remind hon. members that there is no motion before the house. I have permitted certain questions because the minister made a very important statement, but I do not think there should be a debate. It is against the rules.

Mr. GRAYDON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of privilege relating to what you have just said. I think that, from the way the matter has gripped the members of the house, you will realize that this is one of the most serious questions that have come before us and the country since the end of the war, and some latitude ought to be allowed in a matter of the kind. I can quite understand that Your Honour would not want to permit open debate upon it, but a reasonable number of questions might be allowed which would bring into relief the position of the government and the strike situation. Such questions ought to be permitted and may I ask very humbly that Your Honour permit them at this time.

Mr. MACKENZIE: I think there is some merit in what the hon. member has said, but the proper place, surely, is on the orders of the day. This is being done under motions.

Mr. GRAYDON: We have done this on occasion before, and the subject is now before the house. No one realizes better than my hon. friend that once a subject passes and something else comes up it is not always possible to revive that subject and place it in the same position as it was before. I would ask as a matter of special consideration that Your Honour do not restrict hon. members too much.