

Inquiries of the Ministry

Then we read in the newspapers—and we were all very happy—that this strike had been settled. An increase of \$1.40 a day had been granted and another probable increase on the basis of increase in tonnage in the next year. These were the facts given to us, and all the men went back to work. Then in a few days they were again out on strike. I had thought someone would ask for a statement with respect to that situation. The only information we got is that there is a difference in interpretation of the settlement agreement. I do say, with great respect, that when it comes to a matter of interpretation of an agreement arrived at between two people and a disagreement arises, any labour department that is worthy of the name could go in and give the proper interpretation and stop this nonsense which is going on in Nova Scotia at the present time. This is the second strike over an interpretation of some little clause in an agreement.

It seems to me that we are entitled to a complete and full statement as to the situation. At the moment it is no use worrying about something that cannot bring immediate results. A settlement of the strike will bring practical results, because the men will be earning money again and the basic industry of Nova Scotia, which is coal and steel—nothing else compares with it—could get going. If that cannot be done by the intervention of the labour department, may I repeat that it is of very little value. Let us get that done, let us get Nova Scotia rolling in this month of June. Then we can develop our oratory as best we may, as long as our lungs last, in describing the beauties of that excellent part of the Dominion of Canada.

Hon. PAUL MARTIN (Minister of National Health and Welfare): I am sure that we have listened with close attention to what has been said by those who have taken part in a debate which I would have preferred taking place tomorrow night or some other day. However I want to assure those who took part in the debate that I will bring it to the attention of my colleagues, the various ministers connected with several of the matters referred to by hon. gentlemen, and the government will continue to give these matters its serious and active interest.

I need only remind the house that the observations made by the hon. gentleman who has just spoken, observations that I am sure we have all noted with great interest, will be brought to the attention of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mitchell). May I remind him that when the Minister of Labour did give his interest to this matter he acted in such a manner as to receive commendation from

[Mr. A. L. Smith.]

the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Black), who is unfortunately not in his seat tonight because of illness. The government is interested in this matter. It is interested in seeing that the economy of this country in all its aspects works to the point of giving to its people the opportunity of as full a life as possible. I can only say, Mr. Speaker, that these matters will be continuously and continually receiving the attention of the administration, and I trust that I may now proceed to my own estimates.

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee of supply, Mr. Golding in the chair.

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

366. Departmental administration, \$126,198.

Mr. MARTIN: Stand.

Mr. FLEMING: Mr. Chairman, this was not the arrangement at all.

Mr. MARTIN: It was arranged last Friday that we would go into two departments. The hon. member for Davenport will corroborate that.

Mr. MacNICOL: That is right.

Mr. MARTIN: As soon as we call the items in these two different departments we shall let them stand and go on with national health and welfare.

Mr. FLEMING: My point is that we should not be going into these other departments now but should be going on with national health and welfare. That was the understanding with the hon. member for Hastings-Peterborough.

Mr. MARTIN: This is no violation of that understanding. I undertook that we would go into supply again tomorrow night. The hon. member for Davenport will, I am sure, corroborate that the procedure we are following is correct.

Mr. MacNICOL: That is right.

Mr. FLEMING: What is going to happen tomorrow night? Is the minister proposing to call two new departments tomorrow night?

Mr. MARTIN: No. We shall take either agriculture or health and welfare.

Item stands.

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE

379. Departmental administration, \$246,417.

Item stands.