

did.

Mr. Hannon In order to satisfy the chairman of the Finance Committee and my friend from Bonavista Centre, I say here now without fear of contradiction, that the Commission government did issue that order, that certain rates of wages be paid in Newfoundland when the war was on, when the military boys were running it here. I was in a position to know, as I happened to be employment agent at Gander, and had all to do with the rates of wages, rising demand and all the rest. I received orders from the President of the Atlas Construction Company, no less a person than Sydney Dawes, and before he gave the order he said, "What kind of rum have you got there?" "Well," I said, "not much rum." He says, "I didn't think so." "Hannon," he said, "you're to pay labourers only 30 cents." I said, "Well, Mr. Dawes," I said, "we can't get labourers." An order from the government, and to settle it the only way we could to get the labourers there to re-engage, thousands and thousands of men, was to offer them 10% in savings securities, and we were never allowed to pay them any more than 30 cents cash. As a matter of fact I saw the official order, and I have a copy of it at home. Anybody can doubt of course, but I'm prepared to produce it.

Mr. Chairman Would you mind Mr. Hannon, before you resume your seat, whose signature was on it?

Mr. Hannon Well now Mr. Chairman, I would much rather not say under whose signature it was, but I'm sincere about it, and...

Mr. Chairman All right sir, all right then...

Mr. Hannon If I'm forced to give their signature, I certainly shall.

Mr. Chairman Well then, your position on the question is that not alone were you informed by this Atlas representative at the time that you and he first adverted to this question, that the amount of wages to be paid labourers would be at the rate of 30 cents per hour, but in addition to that, you saw an official order.

Mr. Hannon Yes.

Mr. Chairman Which corroborated what he said.

Mr. Hillier It has been asserted that the Commission government issued an order in connection with rates of pay. I would like to ask whether the government actually did that on their own, or

whether they were prompted to do so by pressure of business or some local industries or something like that?

Mr. Cashin You can put it, yes, but it doesn't excuse the government one way or the other for doing it.... I don't know, and I don't believe that business did that. They might for what I know, I don't know. We didn't go into that matter as to whether business asked them or not. It didn't matter materially. The important thing was that this order was issued directly or indirectly, and we've had proof now this evening that it was done. I don't know whether any businessmen asked them to do that. I couldn't tell you.

Mr. Smallwood If my raising the point did nothing more than to bring Mr. Hannon to his feet, it was well worth doing. Now perhaps I have more information on this than any man in this house or any man in this country. I was editor of a newspaper in this city called *The Express*. One of the owners of that paper was Mr. Higgins who sits opposite there now. As editor of that paper I made it my business to get to the bottom of it. I knew, and everyone knew the story that was going around that the Americans and the Canadians were willing to pay more money, but that the Commission of Government had influenced them in some way or other to keep the wages down and not to pay the wages that they were willing to pay. Everyone knew that rumour. And I decided to get to the bottom of it. My first step was to go to Colonel Bruton, who was in charge of the United States engineering forces, the first man to come here. He had offices in the Reid building on Duckworth Street. From him I could get only enough to make me feel that I was on the right track. Naturally he was an American officer representing the American government. They were dealing with the Newfoundland government and he didn't like to say too much. But he said enough to show me that I was on the right track. So what I did was this; and if I'm not mistaken I think Mr. Butt can corroborate some of what I'm going to say. At that time Mr. Butt was confidential secretary or assistant secretary for Public Utilities, working with Sir Wilfred Woods. I had an interview with Sir Wilfred Woods on this question. Was the Government of Newfoundland responsible for keeping the wages down? That's all I went to see him about. I told him that at the start. And I said to him, "Sir