

it has not been. But whether or not there has been any evidence produced to support the conclusion that the Commission of Government did bring this about, there has been no evidence at all produced to support the conclusions as to how or why or in what circumstances they brought it about.

Mr. Hollett Mr. Chairman, that is the point that I'm trying to get home. I don't like to see people endeavouring to make certain capital, I won't say of what kind.... Will somebody tell me this, why aren't the American people and the Canadian people in the country today paying wages similar to such as are being paid by the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company and the Buchans Mining Company, which I know to be pretty good wages? They may not be enough, but I think every working man in the area from which I come will tell you, or tell me, that they are getting much more than the men who are working on the American bases. Now is the Commission of Government still keeping the Americans from paying these men their wages? If they are, it's time to get the Americans out of it, I would say. I say this in all fairness to the companies, vested interests if you like, in the area from which I come. While I know they're going to try to get labour for the least amount that they can pay, from what I found they only had to be approached by the representatives of the various unions and their cases got good consideration, and nine times out of ten they got what they asked for. So I cannot sit here and allow any man to say that that which happened in 1941-42 or whenever, definitely was brought about by such vested interests, unless proof positive is brought here for me to see. I think I would be unjust not only to the vested interests, but also to the employee who works with them if I didn't take some notice of that. Now what one member has said here may be perfectly right, but I want to see the proof before I allow it to go unchallenged.

Mr. Jackman Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of information and I don't know whether it's a question of privilege as well. But I'll put it to you straight. Last year in this House I asked a question regarding government wages on Bell Island for labour. I received an answer back saying that the wages on Bell Island, that is government wages, were the prevailing rate of labour. We never received them first nor last. They did come up to

50 cents. My question of privilege, sir, I don't know if I'm in order to put it here at this hour, but I have been questioned on Bell Island by certain people inasmuch as to say that I was derelict in my duty to see that labour outside of our organisation was getting a square deal. Of course, that hasn't anything to do with us but nevertheless I was blamed for it.

Mr. Chairman You're just getting off the...

Mr. Jackman I am sir, yes, pardon me. I maintain that the answer we received last fall here was that the Commission of Government was paying highroad workers the prevailing rate of pay on Bell Island, which was 58 cents an hour for the lowest man. The prevailing rate I found out afterwards, I'm not sure yet, that's why I rise to a question of information, was 50 cents at the end of last year. Possibly they never thought this thing was going to carry on as long as it is: I didn't either. But possibly they thought that wouldn't carry on, and as far as I understand now it's back to 40 cents.

Mr. Chairman I'm sorry Mr. Jackman, but the tenor of your remarks is such that I'm unfortunately compelled to rule you out of order.

Mr. Jackman I respect your ruling, sir.

Mr. Chairman The section, if I may Mr. Jackman, under discussion is the third paragraph on page 52 in which the statement is made that the Finance Committee also deplores the action of the Commission of Government with respect to restriction by the rates of pay to be given our Newfoundland workmen in the construction of the American bases, inasmuch that the Commission gave direct or indirect instructions to the American and Canadian contractors not to pay Newfoundlanders the same rates of pay as the American workmen performing similar work, on the grounds that it would upset the general economy of the country. On this point I feel duty bound to sustain Mr. Hollett on the position taken by him. I think it is decidedly unwise, in fact I think it's a decidedly dangerous thing to make allegations or imputations unless and until you're able to prove that they are true in substance and in fact.

I make no ruling at all on that portion of the report which states that wages paid on the bases were lower than they otherwise would have been had it not been for government intervention; on that point obviously I can make no ruling. I'm not