

Labour Dispute at Montreal

between the two parties without any intervention whatsoever by the minister or the Acting Prime Minister. It seems, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. members opposite should assume their responsibilities and settle his matter once and for all.

[English]

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. The hon. member has just made two statements that are not in accordance with the facts. He said the minister has not taken his responsibility and that the government has not shown any interest in this matter. Both these statements are erroneous. The government does take its responsibility seriously, and, in fact I have met with one of the parties. My officials have met with the other side, and I have offered to meet them. I welcomed the opportunity to do so. So when the statement is made that the government is not taking its responsibility seriously it is completely erroneous, and the record should be put straight.

Mr. Ricard: I rise on the question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. I fail to see that there is any question of privilege in what the Minister of Labour just said.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I agree with the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have just a few words to say. Your Honour must be so familiar with all the citations regarding standing order 26 that you can rattle them off by heart. The members of the house must know them all by now as well, so I will not repeat them today. Surely, Mr. Speaker, there are times when it is obvious that the question which has been raised under standing order 26 is one that the house ought to discuss. I put it to you very simply. In view of the seriousness of this matter in the Montreal area, and in view of its repercussions across the country, is this not the kind of situation that standing order 26—

Mr. Nicholson: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. It is of any help, may I make it clear that so far as the government are concerned we welcome the opportunity to have a debate on this matter.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The minister may have an opportunity of indicating this fact after I have heard the representations of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

[Mr. Ricard.]

Mr. Knowles: I had just about completed my remarks, Mr. Speaker. The only other thing I was going to say is that since the Minister of Labour has already entered the debate it might as well be continued. I do believe that this is the kind of matter for which standing order 26 was designed.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps we may abbreviate the debate.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot (Mr. Ricard) was kind enough to give me notice of this motion so that I was able to consider it and to look into the circumstances mentioned. The only difficulty I encountered, and which still remains, is that, according to the information I obtained this morning before coming to the house, this litigation is now in a way and up to a certain point before the courts, because of an application for an injunction made this morning. This has created some difficulty.

I understand perfectly that there must be a distinction between an injunction and the procedure usually followed under the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act. However, in view of the particular circumstances which the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot brought to the attention of the house, I believe I must answer the question asked by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) in the affirmative and accept the motion.

Mr. Ricard: Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to add further remarks to those I have made already. I should like to thank—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will now have to introduce his motion.

[English]

We will attempt to be of assistance to the hon. member in a moment. The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot, seconded by the hon. member for Ontario moves that the house do now adjourn.

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): All these crises, Mr. Speaker, have occurred as a result of the ineptness of this government in the performance of their duties. These are always laughing matters on that side of the house. Well, I say to them that they have to take their responsibilities more seriously than they have up to now.