

Pacific Coast Longshoremen Dispute

done in other countries. If the minister feels that if there were a right of appeal he would act, then in the interests of the Canadian economy I say, let him do so.

The minister says that a mediator would not be effective. I suggest he appoint a mediator. Others have made this suggestion. But the minister has answered categorically that a mediator cannot do anything. If a mediator cannot do anything. Mr. Speaker, then what is the minister going to do? The minister has been to Vancouver and seen the people involved. Some labour officials must have been dealing with this matter over and over again in the last while, but their dealings have been totally ineffective because the parties cannot be brought together. The minister says that he has no power today to take action. I say that Canada's economic security comes above other considerations.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) followed today a course that could have been helpful in other cases, namely of allowing an adjournment for the purpose of discussing this question. But nothing will result if we just talk and discuss: Let us act.

We will support forthwith—and I hope the hon. gentleman will accept this suggestion, Mr. Speaker—action taken to permit of appeals so that the minister will be empowered to make recommendations to the governor in council, who can act immediately to meet this problem. Certainly there can be no drastic objection to there being a right of appeal from a decision of the Canada Labour Relations Board. If they are right they have nothing to fear. If they are wrong in their decision they should welcome an appeal.

I know that sometimes judges take the strongest possible objection to being reversed on appeal. We have often heard counsel arguing a case in the Court of Appeal. Then finally the Court of Appeal say to him: "Well, surely counsel is not going to continue that argument, which deals with a matter which is fundamental. Does he not expect this court to have some appreciation of a matter of fundamental law?" Then the classic answer is: "My Lord Chief Justice, that is the mistake that I made in the court below".

• (12:10 p.m.)

Appeals are too often denied in too many fields. An appeal against an order of the Canada Labour Relations Board can hurt no one. The government would not act in a way that was contrary to justice and equity in reversing a decision of the Canada Labour Relations Board. Are we to allow Canada to

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

be paralyzed economically because the law as it now stands denies the possibility of action being taken? It is as simple as that, and I should like to hear the Prime Minister on this.

Never before has there been such a necessity for co-operation. The economic security of the country is at stake. You can play around with a problem and say that you believe in mediation and in other devices. Thus we talk about Harry Bridges and others under his direction, and about certain employers who are not showing the responsibility they should. There is wrong on both sides. If the wrongs can be cured without injustice by the right of appeal, then bring it in.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, anyone who listened to the minister this morning must have been disappointed at the tepid, timorous approach he takes to what now constitutes a national emergency. No one hearing the minister, and unaware of what is going on would have realized that at the present time the ports on the west coast are completely tied up. The reports in this morning's press indicate that all three railways—the Canadian National Railways, the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Pacific Great Eastern Railway—have placed an embargo on grain cars coming from the prairies to be loaded at the ports of British Columbia. In addition to this the last reports show that between 45 and 50 ships are standing in Vancouver harbour, many of them loaded with perishable commodities such as mandarin oranges. Other ships have had to go to Seattle to be unloaded, to have their goods brought by truck to Vancouver. Affected also is the fruit crop of British Columbia, which must be moved because it is perishable. A large part of that is immobilized. Forest products are piling up on the docks, resulting in the announcement made yesterday by MacMillan, Bloedel and others engaged in the forest product industry that 10,000 men in the sawmills and logging camps will have to be laid off in the next few days. This, for the western provinces, is a national emergency. All we have had from the minister is a recital of the difficulties which he has faced, about which so far he has done absolutely nothing.

The minister reviewed what happened and I want to take a moment or two to recapitulate that. The difficulty arose, as the minister said, because the foremen of the work gangs on the Pacific coast asked to be certified as a local, known as 514, for the purpose of bargaining collectively about their hours, wages and conditions of labour. The minister put the