

*Labour Conditions*

either in this sort of situation or in negotiations for salary agreements. I think we can face the legislation as it is before us, and reject it on other bases quite removed from the basis of personality.

**Mr. T. S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni):** Mr. Speaker, one of the things which impressed me about the minister's introduction of this bill was the length of the double-barrelled speech he delivered earlier today and the other evening when he first moved second reading. I know him well enough to believe he was making an attempt, to the best of his knowledge and ability, to present the house with a full, detailed account of the rather tumultuous events in which he was deeply involved, leading up to the point at which we now find ourselves.

The question of whether the minister's story was complete and told the whole events has been discussed by previous speakers. The point I would like to make is that the longer I listen to him the more convinced I became that he had so lost himself in the trees that he was not able to see the forest, and the fact that we have this obnoxious piece of legislation before us is because, in the course of being involved in these trees, the minister lost his sense of perspective in this whole matter. As a result, I feel that the minister and the government are asking parliament to compound a most grievous error in this whole field of labour-management relations, and the role of government and parliament in them.

The sequence of events covers quite an extended period, but certainly up to the time when this bill was announced no one in the house had serious reason to believe that the government had anything of this nature in mind. On June 9 the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas) addressed a question to the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) who, in reply, said he felt there would be an early break-through in negotiations and, as recorded at page 6173 of *Hansard*, said:

We have not given up that hope. Judge Lippé is negotiating at this moment; we have been in touch with him during the last hour and we have not by any means given up hope that this serious issue will be settled very shortly by the processes of free collective bargaining and not by parliamentary direction.

Some hon. members, presumably on the government side, are recorded as having said, "Hear, hear".

[Mr. Johnston.]

● (8:50 p.m.)

Then the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Thompson) asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson):

In view of statements made last night in a national telecast regarding compulsory arbitration in this critical strike situation, what is the point at which the right hon. gentleman considers the national interest will take priority over the desire, now expressed in government policy, to refrain from interference with free collective bargaining?

Then Mr. Pearson is reported as saying:

That is a matter for the government of the day and the parliament of the day to decide. It is a very important and very difficult matter to decide. It will have to be left to the responsibility of government and of parliament in respect of any particular situation. Meanwhile, I can say our decision on this matter is not made easier by the kind of press release the New Democratic Party issued this morning.

Then some hon. members again, presumably on the government side, are reported as having said "Hear, hear".

Mr. Speaker, reference already has been made to the statement of the minister when he announced the settlement of the dispute. I should like to draw attention to the reaction to the minister's statement on motions on June 14 by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas), when he commented on behalf of this party. This I believe confirms the impression certainly that was in my mind, and so far as I know in the minds of all members of the house, with the possible exception of those who were privy to the discussions in cabinet. At page 6368 the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas) said:

There will be a sigh of relief across this country that the longshoremen's strike has now ended. I can assure the Minister of Labour and the Prime Minister that the members of this party are very happy that a solution has been found without the necessity of parliamentary intervention.

A little later at page 6369 of *Hansard* he goes on to say:

I hope we will receive from the minister very soon some details as to the terms of the settlement. The minister mentioned, for instance, that he is going to set up a commission of inquiry to look into the question of the reduction of work gangs. While the minister uses the term "productivity", I take it from the statements made by the shipping federation that when they refer to productivity they are talking about getting the same amount of work done with smaller work gangs.

I certainly have no objection to the idea of setting up a commission of inquiry to look into this matter, providing the decisions and recommendations of that commission are not binding upon both parties but are simply for the purpose of providing a basis upon which collective bargaining negotiations may continue. I hope the minister will give us some more information about that, perhaps when the orders of the day are called.