

Labour Conditions

order that parliament can hear somebody else's side of the story. The minister apparently did not treat Mr. Cutler's request with any great respect because on June 14 he told us he would have something further to say about the subject upon the appointment of the commissioner.

On June 23 the minister announced the appointment of the commissioner and his remarks were noticeably barren of any reference to this something additional. Was that at the request of Mr. Cutler or anybody else? Let me read the statement the minister made on June 23:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table copies in English and French of the appointment of Dr. Laurent Picard, under the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act, as a commission to investigate and report on certain outstanding matters arising out of the industrial dispute that involved longshoring operations and related trades in the ports of Montreal, Trois-Rivières and Quebec.

Let me read part of it again:

—as a commission to investigate and report—

Those are the words in the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act, "investigate and report"—not "investigate and impose". I submit that, with all the bland comments of the minister, he is doing a darned poor job of trying to cover up for gross mismanagement in an attempt to represent one particular side in this dispute. I am not one of those who usually refers to years of experience, and the like, but never have I heard anything in the labour-management field as terrible as this. The most gracious way in which I can put it, the most kind comment I can make is that it is a piece of legislation based on a misunderstanding.

For heaven's sake, Mr. Minister, don't ask this parliament to stigmatize itself by authorizing yellow dog contracts. There have been enough of them in the past, of sell-out contracts by unscrupulous individuals in both the labour and management fields, and to demean the position of parliament in endorsing such things is, I think, asking too much of parliament.

The Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill) earlier today referred, by way of query I think, to the contents of a bill in my name which was listed for introduction. Because this information was requested I think it might be worth while to place on the record the key points of that particular bill, those that relate to the question of negotiations and operation under the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act. I might say that even though the bill was in my name, I

[Mr. Howard.]

only acted in that respect as an agent for the party itself, because this was a matter of strong unanimity.

• (8:00 p.m.)

We had no illusions that the bill would be accepted or that it might become law; such is not the course to be followed in this house. Our main contention and approach at that time was to get negotiations under way which would lead to a solution.

Let me read clause 7 of the bill that I had hoped I could introduce. It says:

The company and each union—

And let me add there are previous parts to this interpretation clause which define the words "company" and "union". It goes on to say:

—shall forthwith and, in any case not later than five days from the commencement of this act, enter into negotiations with a view to the settlement of any matters presently in dispute between them as to the terms of an amendment or revision of the existing collective agreement, and shall negotiate in good faith with one another and make every reasonable effort to conclude a settlement and to enter into a new collective agreement.

The principal point behind this clause is not compulsory arbitration but compulsory negotiations, which I think anyone would want to see, because for some five weeks up to that time there had been no attempts to bargain in good faith so as to reach a conclusion in the dispute. We felt that one of the principal points in any law of this nature should hinge upon the requirement that there be collective bargaining in good faith.

I might add at this point that I received comments from several hon. gentlemen opposite in an unofficial way, and that they were almost venomous in their opposition to this sort of legislation. I will refrain from mentioning their names, as they know themselves better than I do, but their objections and comments made to me personally related to compulsory arbitration. This is another reason why I welcome the opportunity to present the principal point in this bill, which is that it does not contain any element of compulsion, except to require compulsory negotiations which are most necessary in order to reach a settlement.

Mr. Pickersgill: May I ask the hon. gentleman whether he would read all the operative sections of this bill? I do not ask him to waste the time of the house by reading the interpretation clause, but maybe he will read to us all the operative clauses, and not just clause 7.