

*Labour Dispute at Montreal*

should have seen to it that they are respected.

Had strong measures been taken, that crisis could have been avoided. Therefore, if the present Minister of Labour (Mr. Nicholson) cannot have all the terms respected through adequate legislation, the government should consider a cabinet reshuffle as soon as possible without waiting for the next elections.

I hope that the minister will make an important statement which will reassure all the people who are more or less affected by the present crisis in the port of Montreal, telling them that it will be possible to solve it immediately. The minister should use all his influence to help both parties to come to an agreement and respect their contract.

[English]

**Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Albert):** Mr. Speaker, my remarks will be very brief, but I should like to make use of the opportunity to speak during this adjournment motion on the point in question. I can indicate my interest in this subject because of the general transportation picture in eastern Canada. The ports of Halifax and Saint John, which are undergoing a difficult transformation period—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Perhaps I should not interrupt the hon. member immediately, but I must remind him as I have reminded others that the only reason this motion was granted was that there is an allegedly serious situation in the port of Montreal. Had the motion dealt with general transportation policy I assure the hon. member it would not have been allowed. The only term of reference the hon. member has is the motion itself.

**Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert):** You are quite right of course, Mr. Speaker. I intended to indicate my general fear that this strike might spread to other ports. Reference was made to the fact that two or three days ago the effect of the strike had been felt in Three Rivers and Quebec. These effects are now moving substantially into these ports with dislocations there. I want to put on record my fear that these dislocations may occur in other ports. The ports of Halifax and Saint John are operating under old agreements and may not be affected, but we know that once these things get going they spread rapidly.

I want to express my hope that the minister will act in this regard. He admonished the different parties yesterday in respect of this matter, but this evidently had little or no

[Mr. Laprise.]

effect. We have received representation from the Montreal port council and from the Canadian Export Association through Mr. J. M. McAvity, who in no uncertain terms urged the minister to take action. It is my hope that the minister will not sit back any longer in the hope that by some miracle the court will find a solution, or action will be forthcoming that has not already become apparent.

I listened to the minister on the radio this morning when he suggested this strike was akin to another situation in Vancouver. He said that situation was waited out and finally resolved. I should like to remind him that there is great urgency at this time, with the Christmas season approaching and because of the perishable nature of many goods being transported at this time of the year. The minister cannot wait any longer to take action. As one who for many years has had fears about general transportation in eastern Canada I should like to express my hope that the minister does not let this situation continue.

**Mr. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce):** Mr. Speaker I just have a few questions I should like to put to the minister. I hope he will be able to supply the answers. The core of this dispute seems to be related to the interpretation of the Picard report, as to what certain provisions mean. I see that the Montreal port council and others have suggested that if necessary these interpretations should be made by Commissioner Picard in order to clarify his own conclusions and recommendations. However, the unions have rejected any further clarifications by Mr. Picard because they say he is a party to the arbitration report, and therefore some other interpretation formula must be found. I have here a recommendation by Mr. Cutler, which is that another arbitrator should be appointed to interpret the differences in the report.

• (12 noon)

I understood from the minister's reply yesterday that there were grievance and arbitration provisions in the collective agreement. I want to ask him this question. When he met with the parties on Friday did he suggest that they have these differences in interpretation worked out under the grievance provisions in the agreement; and if so, what was the response? Also, what has been the response of the unions to settling these differences in interpretation by the grievance and arbitration provisions in the agreement?