

Labour Conditions

dealing with the national productivity council, I presume that his speech was made with the same amount of force and energy.

It would seem that the national productivity council legislation set up in 1960 must have been extremely successful. The objects of that legislation were to provide expanding opportunities for increased employment and trade and rising national standards of living, and to promote and expedite continuing improvement in productive efficiency in the various aspects of Canadian economic activity. I hope no one will come to the conclusion that the legislation dealing with automation has become a necessity because of the great success of this productivity council. The legislation provided for in chapter four of the statutes of 1960 would I am sure give the minister almost as much power to co-ordinate the activities of labour, management and government as this legislation appears to give, at least on the surface.

I should like to deal for a moment with some of the remarks of the hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard. He was concerned about the drop in employment in the banks. I want to assure him that I almost shudder when I go into my local bank and see the number of men and women who are apparently living off the interest on the loan that I obtain and those that others obtain. There seems to be no rapid decline in employment in the chartered banks.

Mr. Berger: What about debt free money?

Mr. Byrne: Debt free money may be one way of giving assistance, in that there would no longer be any need for keeping track of our payments.

Then, the hon. member also introduced into this discussion of automation the question of the medical care program in Saskatchewan. I do not know, I am sure, just what connection there is between these subjects. As I have already said, the minister used a lot of phrases in introducing this subject which did not seem to mean very much, so I suppose that taking the hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard to task for introducing medicare into this discussion is not fair. However, I should like to point out to the hon. member that people are not rushing into Saskatchewan to take advantage of the medical care program. As a matter of fact, there are less people employed in industry in Saskatchewan now than there were in 1944 when this paradise was first established.

Mr. Peters: This is not true. Show me the figures. Some people might have left the farms, but that is untrue of industry.

Mr. Byrne: If the hon. member wishes to make a speech on this subject, he is at liberty to do so.

Mr. Peters: I think I will.

Mr. Byrne: I repeat that there are less people employed in industry in Saskatchewan at this date than in 1944, that is in manufacturing industry. Apparently they are looking after the problem in Saskatchewan without assistance from the minister.

Mr. Barnett: Is not the same true in British Columbia?

The Deputy Chairman: Only one hon. member can have the floor at one time.

Mr. Byrne: I have mentioned earlier legislation that was passed in this house in 1960 establishing the national productivity council. Where has it gone? What has it done? Apparently it was hoped that the work of this council would get under way back in March because on March 15, 1961 a meeting was held in Ottawa between labour, management and the government. This meeting was under the sponsorship of the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Trade and Commerce. I have here an article from the *Ottawa Citizen* dated October 12, 1962 from which I should like to quote:

Most of Canada's top business and union leaders attended the Ottawa meeting at the personal invitation of Trade Minister Hees and Labour Minister Starr.

They are reported to have agreed to establish a permanent council to be financed by all three groups, to foster continuing co-operation and consultation on economic problems among labour, management and government.

Apparently they were discouraged in this undertaking by the government representatives because, if we may interpret the reasoning, they felt this body they were going to sponsor was going to be an effective body to promote production and good management-labour relations. However, it has not been successful. Yesterday when I questioned the minister on the matter of unemployment, he indicated that the only real unemployment at this moment was in the farm labour field. This is not so. The minister keeps his head in the sand and he should pull it out, at least as far as his ears so that he can hear if he cannot see.

Mr. Starr: You have been away for a long time and do not know what has been happening.

Mr. Byrne: We certainly hope this legislation is going to accomplish something, and that it is not just another smokescreen to get over another general election. There are more and more words used, but there are no deeds. Of course, for the first three or four years the government was in power, they said