

Labour Conditions

LABOUR CONDITIONS

SEAMEN'S STRIKE—PRESS REPORT AS TO USE
OF TROOPS IN CORNWALL

On the orders of the day:

Mr. M. J. COLDWELL (Rosetown-Biggarr): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Defence, of which I have not given him notice. Has the minister any comment to make on the statement so widely publicized in the press of last Saturday that Colonel R. E. A. Morton, officer commanding, Camp Borden, had troops in readiness to proceed to Cornwall if necessary in connection with the strike? This was regarded as intimidation.

Hon. DOUGLAS ABBOTT (Minister of National Defence): I have no comment to make other than that contained in a statement which was issued by my department. No such instructions were given, and Colonel Morton was speaking on his own authority. The statement which I authorized indicated that the district officers commanding are bound to be prepared in the event of the local attorney general calling for aid for the civil power by having troops available to meet that demand. No special arrangements were made, no leave was stopped, and no troops were alerted. I think the statement which Colonel Morton made was no doubt accurate, but it was made entirely on his own authority and responsibility.

Mr. COLDWELL: The point of my question is, should an officer make such a statement without first consulting the department?

Mr. ABBOTT: The answer is no.

ADVERSE DECISION OF REGIONAL BOARD IN JOINT
APPLICATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. C. E. JOHNSTON (Bow River): Would the Minister of Labour explain why the regional war labour board of Ontario refused to approve a wage schedule which was mutually agreed to by the management and the union? This question arises over a dispute in connection with an increase in wages between the united steelworkers of America, Fittings Limited and—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. The hon. gentleman knows that his question should be brief and to the point.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I have already given notice to the minister.

Mr. MITCHELL: My answer is—

[Mr. McCuaig.]

Mr. SPEAKER: I would ask the hon. member to place his question on the order paper.

Mr. HANSELL: Would the minister explain why regional boards refuse to approve wage schedules which are agreed upon by management and unions? I have particularly in mind the case of the united steelworkers; I think the minister is aware of it.

Mr. MITCHELL: That question is easily answered. As my hon. friend knows, or probably the people who ask him know quite well, there is a formula, with which any decision made by a regional board has to comply. That obviously is the reason why in some cases the regional boards have turned down applications, even joint applications by employer and employee.

EXPORT OF TRUCK SPRINGS TO DETROIT

On the orders of the day:

Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Reconstruction and Supply): On June 6 the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggarr (Mr. Coldwell) asked a question as follows:

I am informed that steel truck springs are being exported from Canada by War Assets Corporation and Ontario Steel Products to Detroit Steel Products, where a strike is in progress; and in this telegram the charge is made that this is being done in order to break that strike.

I have looked into the circumstances and I may say at once that no springs have been sold or are being shipped to Detroit Steel Products. Some weeks ago a sale of springs was made to the Chrysler Corporation of the United States. These springs had been manufactured by Chrysler Corporation for inclusion in trucks for shipment to England. Certain supply of these was surplus at the Longue Pointe depot, and was sold, with the approval of War Assets Corporation of the United States, to the Chrysler Corporation of the United States. The price was satisfactory and the springs are being shipped in accordance with the terms of the sale.

Mr. COLDWELL: When these springs are badly needed in Canada, is it the policy to sell them to a foreign country?

Mr. HOWE: They are not suitable for any vehicle made for the Canadian market. They were made for a special purpose for shipment overseas.

SUGAR BEET INDUSTRY—PRISONER OF WAR LABOUR

On the orders of the day:

Hon. HUMPHREY MITCHELL (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I must apologize for not answering earlier the question asked on Wednesday last by the hon. member for