

LABOUR CONDITIONS

APPROVAL OF CONVENTION CONCERNING PROTECTION
AGAINST ACCIDENTS OF WORKERS LOADING
OR UNLOADING SHIPS

Hon. HUMPHREY MITCHELL (Minister of Labour) moved:

That this house do approve of the convention concerning the protection against accidents of workers employed in loading or unloading ships (revised), which was adopted by the general conference of the international labour organization of the league of nations at its sixteenth session in Geneva on the 27th day of April, 1932, as reported from the Standing Committee on External Affairs.

Mr. ANGUS MacINNIS (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I have not the report before me at the present time. However, I recall that there were two resolutions, one of which dealt with statistics in mines and in other industries, and the second of which dealt with safety in the loading and unloading of ships.

I believe the committee in its recommendations drew attention to the lack of adequate inspection and of adequate inspectors. It also drew attention to the fact that the government or the Department of Transport could not get sufficient inspectors of a calibre required to do this kind of work, until the remuneration paid is better than it has been in the past.

The inspector of tackle in connection with the loading and unloading of ships was before the committee, and pointed out that in only five ports in Canada have we inspectors. On the west coast there are inspectors at Port Alberni and at Vancouver. There are no inspectors at Victoria, Prince Rupert or New Westminster. The inspector at Vancouver is supposed to do that work.

These conventions laid down a minimum programme of conditions, in whatever industry they referred to. When a country ratifies or adopts a convention, that country is under the obligation to fulfil the conditions laid down in the convention. I submit that in Canada up to the present time we have not lived up to the minimum required in the convention. Although we have not ratified the convention, I would expect it would be ratified to-night. It will be up to the department concerned to see that these conventions are lived up to.

Mr. A. L. SMITH (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, may I say, speaking for this party, how very much we are in favour of this resolution. I support it personally for two reasons, one of which is quite immaterial, namely, that I want to get home for Christmas. The second is much more important, in

[Mr. Mackenzie.]

that it seems to me that this is a part of a contribution which this nation is making toward the amity of nations, and broad understanding in affairs of this kind.

I compliment whoever is responsible—and I know this began many years ago in Geneva—and would add that I am very happy to be one of those present, and to say on behalf of this group just how much we are in favour of this particular resolution.

Motion agreed to.

APPROVAL OF CONVENTION CONCERNING STATISTICS OF WAGES AND HOURS OF WORK IN
INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE

Hon. HUMPHREY MITCHELL (Minister of Labour) moved:

That this house do approve of the convention concerning statistics of wages and hours of work in the principal mining and manufacturing industries, including building and construction and in agriculture, which was adopted by the general conference of the international labour organization of the league of nations at its twenty-fourth session in Geneva, on the 20th day of June, 1938, as reported from the standing committee on external affairs.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Will the minister state why he believes it is advantageous for us to accept this resolution?

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): I wish to join in that request; and may I assure the house that we hold in this matter the same views I have expressed concerning the one with which we have just dealt.

Mr. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is necessary to repeat what was said when these resolutions were introduced. I have taken a keen interest in the international labour organization since its foundation. I join with the hon. members for Calgary West, (Mr. Smith) and Vancouver East (Mr. MacInnis) in paying tribute to the work of that organization. As I have said before, of the organizations emanating from the treaty of Versailles this one has made as great if not a greater contribution to the welfare of the men and women engaged in commerce, agriculture and industry than any other organization of its kind. My understanding is that during the committee's sittings officials of the international labour office appeared and said that both these resolutions measured up to the conventions adopted by the international labour office. I would recall that the Canada Shipping Act was passed by the Bennett government in 1934.

The international labour office has just finished one of its sessions in Paris. Representatives were there from employers and