

Department of Labour Act

The suggestion being made this afternoon by the government, and I know there are members on both sides of the House who will support it, is absolutely and clearly erroneous that is, that this publication has no useful purpose in the management-labour world of Canada today.

I have to say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to other members of this House, that, as a Conservative who believes in the civility of the community, the *Labour Gazette* is one of the most useful publications the Government of Canada has ever produced. If hon. members will send their researchers to look at this publication over the years they will find that on every great social issue this country has faced for many decades the *Labour Gazette* has treated the matter with intellectual competence and human understanding.

What distresses me so much is that in a wave of what I have to say is false economy we have destroyed this vital and very necessary publication. The hon. member who spoke on behalf of the government for the dissolution or ending of this publication, referred to the fact that its circulation is limited. There are easy ways to increase the circulation of a valid document. There obviously has been no attempt to increase circulation. What that hon. member did not talk about was the loss of those people who have put this publication to work and to press periodically throughout the years. They are now lost to us.

The terrible shame of this whole thing is that we could have kept this document in existence for years for less than what it is costing the taxpayer of Canada for those great full-page ads that have been appearing in the national newspapers of this country about the benefits to their areas of the purchase of a fighter plane. This fatuous advertisement has involved sums of money that have been carelessly thrown away.

When people come to the House and say they want to destroy this publication because of the need for economy, I must say to the House and the public that there are reasons for economies, and there will always be such reasons, but there is nothing more disastrous than mindless moves to limit expenditures for a certain thing when we have nothing to take its place. In this case we will have jettisoned, thrown over, eliminated something that has been of great benefit to the very many Canadians in this country who have needed something like the *Labour Gazette*.

I must say personally that I have no sympathy for anyone in this House, and I care not where they sit, who presumes to support what I think is a fundamentally shortsighted move. I tell those people, and I do not care whether they are in my party or in another party, that this is a mistake. It is a mistake which is breaking a great tradition and which is diminishing the capacity of an independent minded governmental group to comment on matters which are of essential importance to the economy of this country that is, the relations between management, government, and the working men and women of this country. I am sorry to have to do this, but I must register most violent opposition to this bill. I deeply regret that the government has not had the wit or the wisdom to realize that this

kind of uneconomic move, which is what it is called, is a self-defeating move.

● (1600)

I ask all hon. members in this House this afternoon to stop and consider the advertising bill of this government and the countless thousands and millions of dollars which are spent promoting advertisements like some kind of pale, imitation tea party type of program. I would like them then to ask themselves if that money could have been used to save something which is so legitimate and crucial to whether or not this country pays its way in the coming years. I say, with no fear of contradiction—and if anyone wishes to contradict me, I will take them on in any form at any place—the fact is that the relations between management and labour in this country are essential to whether or not we ever balance a budget or get out of the trade deficit situation we are in now. We must provide a civil community in which the people, whether they are being paid a salary or a wage, or whether they are making the decisions within industry or government, are to live together in peace and some kind of reasonable accord.

I deeply regret this move, and I think that it is folly. There will be a time when we may well stand in this House and ask that the publication be reinstated.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member at this time, but perhaps we should seek the unanimous consent of the House if we intend to debate this bill beyond four o'clock.

Mr. Collenette: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I would like to thank the House again for its collaboration this afternoon. The agreement was that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) would speak for a few minutes on Bill S-4 and that we would then give it second reading and send it to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration. We would then immediately proceed through all stages of Bill S-3 without debate, and then to private members' hour, which may go a little beyond five o'clock. If there is unanimous agreement to that, it will be completed within a matter of five minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Is there unanimous consent to that proposal?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Hon. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, the statement just made by the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Collenette) is correct, namely, that we are prepared to keep this debate short and to send this bill to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration. However, when the bill is called after I sit down, I shall be shouting, "on division".

Like the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser), I am strongly opposed to this bill, the purpose of which is to bury the *Labour Gazette*. It is not a case of a funeral immediately at the point of death, because the government killed the