

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Olson: No, Mr. Speaker. That is not true.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I then ask the minister whether he received a letter from the Chief Commissioner dated February 23 which states:

This is a hurried reply to your unexpected criticism of yesterday, that is, that my board has moved too slowly in the steps and procedures required to bring in a new grain Bill and regulations.

Did the minister reply to this letter?

Mr. Olson: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Then I wish you would table it.

Mr. Olson: With Mr. Hamilton's consent I could table the letter some time in the future.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Did he ask for an opportunity to discuss the matter further and did the minister deny him that right?

Mr. Olson: No, Mr. Speaker. I do not think he asked for that opportunity. While I think I should be fairly careful about what I say respecting a private conversation with Mr. Hamilton, I believe I could advise you, Mr. Speaker, and the right hon. gentleman that Mr. Hamilton and I have had a number of discussions over the past two and a half years and Mr. Hamilton has been well aware that I have not been satisfied with his performance during that period.

Mr. Diefenbaker: When the minister brought in the new bill did he let the House know of his dissatisfaction?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the minister whether his latest release in favour of partisan appointments—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member has the floor for the purpose of a supplementary question and I suggest to him he should ask the question.

Mr. Korchinski: In view of the fact that the opposition members on the agricultural committee have been arguing for appointment for a fixed term of office, does the minister consider that his latest actions will be conducive to the early passage of that bill?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, in view of this change may I ask the minister whether it is his intention to appoint an entirely new board with the coming into force of the new Act?

Mr. Olson: No, Mr. Speaker.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

NATIONAL DEFENCE**DOCKYARD EMPLOYEES WAGE DISPUTE—REMOVAL OF PAY DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN EAST AND WEST COASTS IN GOVERNMENT OFFER**

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the President of the Treasury Board. In view of the notice that has now been given of a strike date having been set for Sunday on the part of the dockyard workers at Esquimalt and Halifax, is the government prepared to reconsider its position and do away with the dollar an hour differential as between the east and west coast that is involved in the government's latest wage offer?

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. gentleman will recognize the impropriety and indeed damage to the collective bargaining process if I were to negotiate with him across the floor of the House.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, when this matter has been concluded, will the government be proposing to members of the armed forces that they be paid different rates of pay depending on where they are serving?

Mr. Drury: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. gentleman, particularly with his long service in the House, should realize that the policy is that where employees are not expected to be highly mobile across Canada we endeavour to engage them for service in a locality at rates of emolument appropriate in that locality.

DOCKYARD EMPLOYEES WAGE DISPUTE—NEW GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS IN VIEW OF STRIKE DEADLINE

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Lancaster): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary I wish to ask on behalf of the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants who sent notice of it to the minister.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member knows he cannot ask a question on behalf of someone else. Perhaps the House will appreciate the circumstances in which the question is asked, but the hon. member must ask the question in his own name.

Mr. Bell: I endorse the question on my own behalf, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's reply to the previous member, but can he say whether the government will consider any new proposals in this matter in view of the strike deadline?

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): I think, as has always been the case, the government does not wish at any time to terminate negotiations or discussions. As long as there is room for them and a willingness to discuss, we are ready, willing and able to do so.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Why not make room then?