

*Pacific Coast Longshoremen Dispute*

the implications that now are revealed by that tie-up. I do not think it could be denied that the situation which has brought about this emergency and this discussion discloses two things, both of which are urgent and require immediate and effective action.

The first is the mess in our labour relations laws and in the government's labour relations policy. This year, as other speakers have pointed out, we have had a series of strikes and near strikes in respect of the transportation and shipping facilities of this country which have created the greatest turmoil and confusion and, certainly in so far as this situation in British Columbia is concerned, the greatest hardship within the country in one calendar year.

One would have thought that as they went along the government and the minister would have learned one lesson at least; that is, that you cannot leave situations until they reach emergency crisis proportions, and then bring about a solution without a distortion of the economy and in many respects the labour laws generally. But once again the government has allowed a crisis to develop. In respect of the situation in British Columbia, as other speakers have outlined, the signs have been there, but the minister and the government have shown an inability to make a decision and an inability to intervene effectively. They have also demonstrated an inability to exercise their responsibility in this field. This indicates pretty clearly that not only is the government delinquent in facing up to these problems and in acting in individual cases, but that in fact there exists no effective machinery for the settlement of industrial disputes in these essential industries. That is a fact which the government must face up to without delay.

The second point that the situation illustrates and emphasizes is that there is urgent need for attention to the matter of the docking facilities and the whole operation of the ports on the west coast of Canada in British Columbia. The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Laing) a moment ago asked the hon. member for Acadia a question. I am amazed at the question and the implications in it, to the effect that the operations of the port of Vancouver are efficient. There can be no question about the quality and skills of labour at that port. There can perhaps be no question about the innate ability of the shipping and stevedoring companies to operate. But as to the inadequacy of the facilities and the lack of co-ordination generally there can equally be no doubt. This has

[Mr. Fuiton.]

been demonstrated in increasing measure, particularly in the last two or three years. There has been difficulty in getting railway cars there, turning them around and sending them back for further loads. There has been difficulty in sustaining a rapid and efficient movement of commodities through that port. There has been a lack of co-ordination between rail and road facilities into the port of Vancouver to take advantage of the magnificent harbour area. There has been a lack of facilities at the dockside to unload the cars and trucks that do get in, put their cargoes on the ships as soon as possible and enable the cars and trucks to turn around and go back for further cargoes. There has been a bottleneck in this port, as is established by the evidence contained in the testimony of the representative of the National Harbours Board and the record of the congestion of ships and commodities in the Vancouver harbour area over the past two or three years.

● (12:50 p.m.)

While understandably we tend to concentrate, on the Vancouver harbour area, we must remember that there is a great and growing movement of commodities from Canada to the Pacific area. This demonstrates quite clearly the necessity of the development of alternative and additional harbour facilities, and the planning of a communications system which will enable the goods produced in Canada to reach Pacific coast ports and be loaded on vessels as quickly as possible in order that they may be taken away in the growing trade and commercial stream which Canada is developing.

We in this party have for some years been emphasizing the necessity of a Pacific policy, one essential feature of which would be the development of a co-ordinated rail, road and harbour facilities network. Not only is such a policy necessary in order efficiently to handle the wheat produced on the prairies, and our lumber, but the increasing quantity of mineral products mined in the interior of British Columbia, the petrochemical products coming to the Pacific coast for shipment, and the vast deposits of potash now being developed in Saskatchewan requiring shipment to the Pacific area. The fact that Canada is a Pacific nation, that two thirds of the world's population live in the Pacific area and there is here growing commerce which is bound to increase, make it essential that we develop a shipping and transportation policy to serve this area adequately. There has been almost total neglect in this respect. The particular