

*Combines Investigation Act*

would rank very high; and when you have the consumers' league in Britain, a very responsible body, expressing the views they did they are not to be laughed off, not by a socialist government.

Having said that, I want to read some of the remarks made by Mr. Harris. I believe they are relevant. After all, as my leader said, parliament could not exist except on the assumption that you believe it is possible the things you are saying may have some effect upon the minds of some of the people opposite. You may go on and on being more and more discouraged, but if you came to the point where you believed it was impossible to change the opinion of members opposite it seems to me parliament would have to end. I am sure the minister would agree with that. Therefore I continue to make these arguments. My hopes are not high, but I comfort myself often with the remark made by a wise old friend. He was not talking about the opposition, but I believe his remarks could be applied to them. He said that when you break a stone with the hundredth tap of the hammer, that does not mean the first ninety-nine did nothing. We feel that we are somewhere around the ninetieth or ninety-first tap.

I should like to read from the evidence of Mr. Harris at page—

**An hon. Member:** You need it, sir.

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** I am all right as long as I am reading. The great problem is how long one has to go on to convince other people. Of course, the difficulty, and one of the tantalizing things here, is that we have a profound conviction we have convinced a lot of other people but they won't say so.

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** It is a secret.

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** The Minister of Public Works, on the other hand, is a very different cup of tea, because last Saturday afternoon we had a fine debate in this chamber. At the end he did not say he was convinced, but his actions certainly indicated that he was.

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** On this bill?

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** No, on public works, the thing you know most about. We came away from that debate feeling we had really accomplished something. I apologize for all these digressions, Mr. Speaker, but may I call it 6:15.

At 6:15 p.m. the house took recess.

[Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood).]

**AFTER RECESS**

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, before I continue may I say that a suggestion has been made to me, from a source I respect, that after all the long hours we have had we might perhaps let the page boys off this evening. I hope I am not rocking the boat, Mr. Speaker. I have not done this kind of thing before, and maybe one should not interfere with the routine at all. I have raised this matter because these boys are not as old as we are, and they have had quite a hard time. I think I am one of those who put them to the most work, and I would be ready to do my own chores this evening.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am not sure whether the House of Commons would be able to function without the page boys. They are extremely important.

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** Now that you have referred to them in that way, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that they would much prefer to stay on. Perhaps I had better withdraw my request.

**Mr. Speaker:** I shall be glad to take the matter up with the chief page and see if he thinks it is possible for us to get along without them. I thank the hon. member for having brought the matter to my attention.

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker; I had hesitated to do so.

When we took recess I had been arguing, first of all, that there was no breathless haste here. I had suggested that there was involved no matter of life and death, except possibly to the people who believed they might be grievously injured by the passing of this measure; that nobody was going to suffer immediate damage by the delay in passing it and that, therefore, if there was any question of life and death the argument was for delay and not for immediate action.

I had then gone on to quote at some length from some of the labour men who came before the committee. I had pointed out that they seemed to me to be wise inasmuch as, in answer to questions, they had frequently said: We are not sure about that; there are views on both sides of the case; things must be flexible and not too rigid. I think I would be fair in saying that, by their attitude, they certainly had not indicated a desire to press on, regardless. I also had endeavoured, by reading quotations from the minister himself and from Mr. Lambert, to stress the argument that I thought more could have been done to allow the committee and, through