

● (1620)

Mr. Chuck Cook (North Vancouver-Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I represent a British Columbia riding in which one-third of the Port of Vancouver is located. I talk to a great many people in that port constantly. I am delighted to speak on behalf of my Party as a representative of British Columbia and someone who is most concerned with the particular dispute and labour injustice which is taking place.

Why is it that even when the Liberal Government does something right, it does it so wrong? That is exactly what this legislation is. Don Garcia, head of the longshoremen's union on the west coast, stated yesterday that he thought this piece of legislation was the worst since 1800. With the greatest respect, he is wrong; this legislation is probably the worst since the Roman empire. The Government's settlement as proposed could lead to wildcat strikes, slowdowns in productivity, and even possible civil disobedience on the docks of the ports of the west coast. As one labour official said yesterday, "Six and five per cent means six and five production." Free men should not be legislated into a straightjacket, which is what the legislation proposes.

The Hope report suggested a raise of \$1.55 in the first year and 23 per cent over two years. The British Columbia Maritime Employers Association offered 18 per cent over two years. Now the Government proposes to legislate 11 per cent for these people over the same period of time. There is one fact which the Minister of Labour (Mr. Caccia) seems to have overlooked. Because of a potential settlement of the strike and retroactive pay back to the first of January, maritime employers have been building up a fund to meet that retroactive pay. It now amounts to between \$4 million and \$5 million. This legislation does not indicate what it will do to that fund whatsoever.

The bludgeon and blackmail in the Bill makes it the most disastrous labour legislation as far as the ports on the west coast are concerned. The docks must operate, but the Bill only preserves and enhances the lingering cancers of the west coast dock situation.

For 13 years—in 1969-1970, 1975 and 1979—we have had the same issues and problems and there have been no solutions from anywhere. Why? I think there are some answers for what can be done and must be done on the west coast.

On the one side we have the British Columbia Maritime Employers Association. It is comprised of 64 employer companies and was formed in 1966, and we have not had peace on the waterfront since. There are two basic groups involved. We have the shippers who can move away, and many of them have. Then we have the port users and terminal operators who cannot move away. Destuffing of container cargo has been a major issue on the west coast for many years. It does not affect bulk loaders at all, outside of the fact that they are shut down, which is one of the major issues in the dispute. The British Columbia Maritime Employers Association had better re-examine itself because built within it are dilemmas and conflicts of interest among the 64 companies in regard to the usage of the port. Westshore Terminals is not part of the British Columbia Association at all; it has its own contract. As

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a result it has a permanent work force. It has not had any strikes and is doing quite fine. It is not part of the management group which bargains on behalf of far too many users of the port with different interests.

Let us look at the union side of it—the International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union. The contract is binding on locals 500, 502, 503, 505, 506 and 508 of the ILWU. It affects Vancouver, Prince Rupert, New Westminster and Vancouver Island. It affects only longshoremen. It does not include, I might add, ILWU foremen who will be bargaining very shortly. I hope the Minister of Labour keeps that in mind with this proposed settlement.

Also the Employers' Association must deal with the Canadian area, not the locals of the union. What does this mean? It means that any settlement must be approved by a 19 member executive, many of whom have different ideas and different desires about the settlement of the labour dispute. With that type of thing going on, is it any wonder that in 13 years we have not had labour peace on the west coast and that we have not had settlement of these long outstanding issues? An overwhelmingly large employer group with conflicts of interest and a union organization with an executive of 19 members must all be involved in any decisions made. This is one of the major problems.

How do we address it? Well, we get the destuffing clause, this business of breaking up the containers on the dock or stacking them there. Union representatives say that if they give that up it will reduce work on the docks. Management representatives say that the ports are losing business to Seattle as a result of it. I rather favour management's view on that because a typical example is that the Government of British Columbia brings in all its liquor supplies and spirits through the Port of Seattle. Why? It is \$200,000 in terms of charges, but at least it does not walk off the docks. The Alberta Liquor Board brings in its stocks through Texas as a result of the difficulties on the waterfront in Vancouver. Department stores import something like 170,000 tonnes a year from the Far East. Approximately 60 per cent of it was going through Seattle three years ago; today 75 per cent is going through there. Western Assembly Ltd. of Vancouver has told me that the reason for this is again the question of breaking up containers on the docks.

I am not suggesting that the union is wrong or that management is right. I am asking why one or the other of them has not done marketing surveys to examine the exact facts. If it means more work on the docks as management claims, then the union should be glad to give it up. If it means less work, management has a different problem for which it must compensate in some other way. It is something that can be determined as a fact.

Turning to the questions of full crews and the training of casuals, the situation on the docks is that full crews for the day shift are not available on many occasions. Longshoremen would sooner work afternoons at time and a half or the mid-night run at two times. I do not blame them; I would too. But