

ber 3, fully expecting that the next time we met it would be as part of the Twenty-ninth Parliament.

As I said, I hope that this is the last day of this Parliament. I hope a great change will be evident in the new Parliament when it convenes. It is obvious that there will be some change here in the Senate chamber, but I hope that it will be not only on the walls, that not only will the paintings be refreshed but that there will be new faces, that there will be a change of sides.

The country is entirely fed up with the way this government is handling the business of the country. It is forever trying to defend simultaneously both sides of the same question. This is a fact, and it is obvious. The Leader of the Government himself has just said, "We do not like to intervene, but we have to do so." Well, if you have to, you should enjoy doing it; if it is your duty, you should not be afraid to do it. Why hide? What is the matter with this government? It is always presenting us with bills, saying "We do not like to do this, but we have to do it." Come clean, and tell us frankly where you stand in these matters.

Last July this government presented us with a bill inviting the people to obey the law. This was something I had never seen before. That was an illegal strike which the government had allowed to continue for over 50 days, if my memory serves me correctly. At that time the government would not apply the Canada Labour Code. It had some instruments to deal with the situation, but it would not use them. Now we have this legal strike and after three weeks, and just a few days after telling us it was not a matter for reconvening Parliament, the government tells us it should have acted before. In fact, this is what the government leader said, that it should have acted before. He tells us now that the damage to the economy is extensive. In other words, he admits that the government is guilty of having acted too late, of being late in bringing in this legislation.

I think we can all agree that it was quite obvious some time ago that, if the west coast ports were closed, it would do a lot of damage to the credit of Canada, especially in the grain trade. That was very obvious. But when did the government discover that? Not two days ago; not three days ago, or four days ago. Surely the government must have known this when the strike started some three weeks ago. But the government said, "Oh, no, we don't want to intervene. We should not intervene, because the strike is legal."

Now, realizing that it is cornered by economic factors, the government has to act. But the government's action is also motivated by an electoral factor as well. Quite obviously the government cannot dissolve Parliament and call an election with a strike of this type on its hands. Perhaps it thought it could make political hay by recalling Parliament just one day before the British Columbia election. Even so, it was late again in that instance. That is obvious because the Liberal Party in British Columbia, although it maintained its position in the legislature, lost in the popular vote. In any event, I think that influencing the British Columbia election was only secondary in the mind of the Prime Minister. What the government or the Prime Minister had foremost in mind was the coming federal election.

There is no machinery in the Canadian legislative process for dealing with a situation of the kind facing us now. There should be, but there is not.

It is rather amusing to recall that in the last days before we adjourned on July 7 we passed some amendments to the Canada Labour Code by which we tried to provide some machinery to deal with emergencies arising after the dissolution of Parliament. The "machinery" I am referring to is contained in sections 179 and following of Bill C-183. That machinery would not, in my opinion, be adequate to deal with the present situation. However, even if it were, the fact of the matter is that Bill C-183 has not yet been proclaimed. Why? The government asked Parliament to adopt this legislation, but when Parliament approved the legislation the government did not proclaim it. Why? I am not saying that in the present case the provisions in Bill C-183 would be of any use. It is too complicated for me to give an opinion on the spot. After all, we were given Bill C-231 only yesterday. So I am not going to argue the adequacy or inadequacy of the provisions of Bill C-183. But it appears to me that they would be inadequate in the present circumstances. Of course, for all I know, I may be wrong, but it certainly seems to me to be a strange thing that the government would have legislation passed by Parliament and then not proclaim it, and, by so delaying, be faced with serious problems. It may well be that tomorrow we will be faced with another problem, another strike. I am not referring to the problem we are dealing with today, because we will be through with that shortly, but in two weeks' time, for example, there may still be another strike. I am thinking, for instance, of the postal employees.

In these amendments to the Canada Labour Code in Bill C-183, clause 180 provides:

180. (1) No employer shall declare or cause a lockout and no trade union shall declare or authorize a strike unless . . .

(c) the Minister has

(i) received a notice . . . or

(d) seven days have elapsed from the date on which the Minister

(i) notified the parties of his intention not to appoint a conciliation officer or conciliation commissioner or to establish a conciliation board under subsection 164(1),

(ii) notified the parties of his intention not to appoint a conciliation commissioner or to establish a conciliation board under section 166, or

(iii) received the report of a conciliation commissioner or conciliation board pursuant to section 168.

• (1430)

Therefore, the beginning of a strike could be delayed until after the minister had appointed a conciliation commissioner or a conciliation board, and had received the resulting report. What is interesting with respect to the point I have just made is that section 181 makes it possible for the minister to deal with a problem of that type if it should arise after Parliament had been dissolved. This section reads as follows: