

Labour Conditions

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the remarks of the former independent member for Three Rivers.

[Translation]

Mr. Mongrain: Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my hon. friend that my city is called Trois-Rivières.

[English]

Mr. Howard: Mr. Speaker, on this point of order let me say that I deliberately used the phrase "Three Rivers" and will continue to do so until the hon. member and some of his friends cease to refer to the province from which I come as "Columbie Britannique" and commence to refer to it by its proper name, British Columbia.

[Translation]

Mr. Mongrain: I will say to my hon. friend that I would be greatly pleased to do so, at his request.

[English]

Mr. Howard: In so far as I am concerned now, the riding will now be referred to as "Trois-Rivières".

Mr. Pickersgill: This sounds like a lesson in bilingualism.

Mr. Howard: I want to express admiration for a certain aspect of the Liberal party, and I do so ungrudgingly. Having listened to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Marchand) it seems to me that Liberals, no matter what their origin may be, have a tremendous ability to justify any procedure by distortion of the facts and misinterpretation of the words. That hon. minister obviously set out to substantiate a very poor argument by using the very weakest quotation he could find in *Hansard*. Let me congratulate him on his success.

Under our rules we are required to accept the word of an hon. member. In the circumstances of the present situation we are required to accept the word of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Nicholson) as to what took place during those wee small hours that he talked about. By the same token we are required to call Claude Jodoin and Mr. Cutler liars because of what they said as to what took place.

[Translation]

Mr. Marchand: On a point of order, (Mr. Mongrain.)

Mr. Speaker. I would like to know who said that Messrs. Jodoin and Cutler were liars?

[English]

Mr. Howard: Had the hon. minister been listening he might have understood what I said, but for his benefit I will repeat myself. Our rules require us to accept the word of hon. members of this house. Accordingly we must accept what the Minister of Labour told us took place at these meetings. Whenever there is a conflict between what has been said by the minister and what has been said by Mr. Jodoin and Mr. Cutler as to what took place we must accept the minister's version, and therefore classify the other two gentlemen as liars.

Mr. Marchand: That is not true.

Mr. Howard: That is a regrettable situation, but it is what hon. gentlemen opposite are asking us to do. I for one think this is an extreme misuse of the rules of this house. Unfortunately this misuse will continue so long as the government blindly insists on ramming this bill through parliament, and so long as the government refuses to accept the cautious course advocated by the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) in his amendment.

If hon. members opposite would accept our advice and proceed cautiously in regard to this bill, permitting the subject matter to go to a committee before which hon. gentlemen here, Mr. Jodoin and Mr. Cutler could appear as witnesses, perhaps the committee could come to a conclusion as to the facts. The key to the whole matter is, as has been said by many hon. members and by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, who said what, and who agreed to what? I quite frankly say this, with all due respect to the rules and the minister, that at this juncture I am not prepared to accept the minister's version as to what took place, because on a number of occasions when he has spoken in this house about this matter he has hedged, qualified and been vague.

● (7:50 p.m.)

I think in a situation such as this, perhaps unique in labour-management history, perhaps unique in parliamentary history, that was no time for the Minister of Labour to be coy. It was no time for him to be silent about this extremely vital question of whether or not there should be compulsory arbitration. I should like to read what the minister said, as have other hon. members. On June 14 the