

*Labour Dispute at Montreal*

and would relate his recommendation to productivity in the year 1964, without even taking advantage of the technological changes that had been introduced in the succeeding two and a half years.

The commission said that all workmen, who had reached that level of productivity and were affected by the report, would receive job security but on the other hand they had to do certain things. He said they had to rid themselves of certain objectionable practices, with which he dealt. He went on to outline what they should do. He said the employers must set up a job security fund, as has been done on the west coast where it has worked successfully for years.

Longshore gangs on the west coast, I might interject, have, I understand, been reduced to 12. Before the report was handed down Montreal longshore gangs consisted of 18 men plus a foreman, certain winchmen and others, totalling around 20 or 21 in a gang. As a result of the report: these gangs are to be reduced to 16 men plus a foreman. They have been 16 men plus a foreman in Saint John and Halifax for some years, I believe. They have been 14 and 15 in Hamilton and Toronto for some years and, as I say, there have been about 12 to a gang on the west coast for some years.

The commissioner made his recommendations. He also dealt with the effects of modernization and technological change. He dealt with the size of a sling and sling loads. He said that in future, in view of the changes that had taken place, these men would be able to work under existing conditions as long as proper safety precautions were taken and they acted reasonably. He told them they could put in whatever load was considered reasonable having regard to the particular kind of equipment being used.

A slowdown, not a strike, not a complete stoppage, developed within a few days. I had my officials in Montreal meet with both sides to see whether they could correct this situation. It was on the seventh day of the slowdown that I sent the telegram which I read earlier. Here I pause to refer to an editorial in a newspaper about which I generally say nice things because I have usually been favourably impressed by it. I refer to the *Montreal Gazette*. But there are times when they do get off on tangents, and certainly they did not carry out any research in this matter because the headline says "You Can't Arbitrate Arbitration."

Nothing is more absurd than that editorial, because what was said in the legislation was that the conclusions of the Picard report

would become part of the collective agreements. Those collective agreements provide in no uncertain terms that if a dispute arises as to the application of the terms of the agreements, there may be arbitration proceedings. If a workman feels himself aggrieved because he considers the safety precautions are inadequate, he has the right to grieve and the right to arbitration. If he feels that other changes should be made, having regard to the combination of circumstances that exists, he has the right to grieve. But the significant fact is that work continues while this grievance is being arbitrated.

● (3:00 p.m.)

I am not stating an opinion on whether the unions are right or wrong. They said they did not object to the Picard report and said they are prepared to implement it, although they do not interpret it in the same way as the shipping federation does. I can assure the house, and I am sure the hon. member for Ontario will agree based on his experience, that in a great many cases matters in collective agreements which are binding on both sides need clarification. It might be argued that instead of using the general language, such as "consistent with safety and reasonableness", the commissioner might have gone further.

Another argument might also be put forward with regard to the availability of longshoremen. In his report commissioner Picard said that longshore gangs will be made up of 16 men plus a foreman but that if in any combination of circumstances management feel, in the interests of safety or otherwise, that the longshore gangs should be increased in size they shall be increased and an extra two or three men should be called up. In several instances more men were called up than the required 16 plus a foreman. In the opinion of the shipping federation or of the stevedoring companies there was a need for additional men. However, sometimes only 17 men showed up instead of 17 plus the additional men who were asked for, and when they were asked why they did not get the extra two or three men they said, "They are at home in bed; go and telephone them". That may or may not be contrary to the letter of the Picard report. I have my own opinion on that but I do not feel justified in stating it.

There might be a need for some clarification on one or both of these points. If the spirit of the report were complied with, one would think that at least during the initial period—and the agreement only has a few weeks to run—the extra men who were asked