

But the proposal the minister has made and the bill which is now before us which incorporates this proposal hold out the promise that within a reasonably short period of time the problem of achieving a settlement of the rules of dispatch will be resolved. This does not promise to achieve this result as rapidly as those on management side would like, but for those of us who have concern for the port of Halifax it does hold out the promise of achieving a settlement respecting the rules of dispatch, if necessary by binding arbitration, within a reasonable period of time.

This, of course, is not the place to attempt to negotiate a settlement or a solution. I wish to express the hope that those involved in this dispute and in the operation of the port of Halifax, both on the management and the labour side, will use this period of time not only in an attempt to achieve agreement in respect of the rules of dispatch, but to get the port of Halifax back fully in operation, and that they will use this period of time to restore confidence in the port of Halifax which has received something of a setback.

As I say, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues from the Halifax area will wish to say something in connection with this bill at a later stage, and there may well be some questions to be clarified on matters of detail; but as far as I know, I am the only member of my party who will be speaking at this stage. I simply wish to indicate that, in the circumstances, we feel there is no alternative but to proceed with the bill, and to proceed with it as rapidly as possible through all stages.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow), will be speaking for us on this bill and will indicate our readiness to go along with it. But because of the matters that are involved and the thickness of the document that was tabled, we think it would be a good idea to carry out the agreement made earlier and ask the House now to call it one o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Is that agreed?

Mr. McCleave: Mr. Speaker, I want to speak for only ten minutes during the debate, and my remarks will be of a very general nature. I think the suggestion of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is a very sensible one and we should have an opportunity to study this measure, but surely that can be done after I have spoken, and perhaps my colleague, the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall). Otherwise, I do not intend to intervene in this debate.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I think it would be better to call it one o'clock now and preserve the usual order. It is not going to take very long. Would it not be sensible for us to look at the material that was tabled?

Mr. McCleave: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to be dictated to by anybody regarding my right to represent my area. If I

Halifax Operations Act

am allowed to speak, I will speak, but if I am not recognized, I will not. That suggestion is totally unacceptable to me.

An hon. Member: Let us hear him.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I certainly am not going to be stubborn, but I thought the House had agreed to this during the discussion about proceedings on this matter. I am not trying to cut the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants (Mr. McCleave) off, or to prevent him from speaking. We want to hear him. Our contribution will also be about ten minutes on second reading, but it does seem to me to make sense to take a lunch hour now and look at the whole matter.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): The Chair was under the impression that there was agreement, but there does not seem to be now. I recognize the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants (Mr. McCleave).

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Thank you, Mr. Speaker; you have restored yourself to my favour. As a result, I am going to send down that old pair of black pants I used to wear when I occupied that position. Perhaps you can make them over to your own suitability. I am pleased to see you in the chair. I think you will contribute a great deal to this session and to the proceedings of this parliament.

This will be only the second occasion on which I have publicly made reference to the lock-out which has gripped the port of Halifax. After the lock-out started, someone from radio station CHNS in Halifax called to ask what my intentions were regarding the lock-out. I said I had none at that particular time; that was back in early August. He was the only member of the journalistic world in Halifax who called and solicited my opinion. That may seem strange, but those great figures who are always so prone to rush to get into public print in my part of the world have had their say and their words have been emblazoned on the pages of the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* and *Mail-Star*, as well as on television and in radio newscasts.

Some time earlier, after meeting with my colleagues, the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Stanfield), the former leader of the opposition, and the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall), we determined that we would stay away from publicity on this matter, working behind the scenes to see if any resolution could be found of the issues.

I am not going to give the House a blow by blow account of the 30, 40, 50, 60 or 70 meetings, phone calls, etc., that we had in the interim, but I will sum up our position with regard to this legislation. I say this because of what you will find in dealing with the press in Halifax on a matter such as the hanging bill. Do you know who they went out and interviewed? They interviewed the dog-catchers all over Nova Scotia to find out what they thought about hanging. They would not go near a federal member of parliament, because he is the one who had to make the decision and that would be too direct an approach. That is really what I have to say about the press in Halifax in