

Labour Relations

tion for all. Before considering a solution to the labour-management problem, we should relieve the artificial pressure exerted on the economy. When the purchasing power will have reached the production level, the present struggle to appropriate an inadequate money supply will have ceased.

That is the real reason. We realize that the workers seek a higher income and want job security, while the employer is trying to produce at a competitive cost. Such being the case, according to the motion, the government is to be blamed for being negligent, unconcerned and tolerant to such an extent that drastic measures are now required. The fact remains however that the government can be sure that steps in that direction will get the massive support of the people.

Mr. Speaker, coming back to the example given a moment ago, if the Olympic Games do not take place in Montreal in 1976 because a small QFL group has so resolved, you can be assured that any government that would end these absolutely equivocal, inadequate and inappropriate situations would receive tremendous support from the whole population, and that, without any mental reservation. This is what we must keep in mind and any government action should be oriented toward policies of this kind.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that this motion supported by different points will be well understood. We have spoken plainly because we want the members of parliament to grow aware of problems that are continually cropping up: longshoremen strikes, railway employees' strike, postal employees' strikes. And the minister said a moment ago that if the people do not want strikes, they have to bring about a change! But, Mr. Speaker, people have elected us to do this job. They have elected us to change what is wrong. Sometimes, people find it difficult to communicate in times of dispute. If there is a dispute in the Post Office Department, one cannot write to the minister. If there is a dispute in the telephone system, one cannot get in touch with the minister. As I said, all these strikes disrupt the social and economic life of our country. They have to come to an end and we hope that through this motion, all members of parliament will become fully conscious of the seriousness of the problem.

[*English*]

Mr. Mark MacGuigan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the constructive tone of much of this debate, although it is true that in the speeches of the Social Credit members, and especially in that of the hon. member for Champlain (Mr. Matte), one does not sense a great sympathy for the aspirations of labour unions and members of labour unions.

It is also true that the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond (Mr. Hogan) brought an unduly sharp note into today's proceedings with his parading of some doctrinaire nonsense about the economic policies of the government at the present time, alleging that the government is following restrictive policies similar to those which it followed in 1971. If the hon. member does not know, everyone else in the country knows that the government has been following an expansionary policy, and the gener-

[Mr. Matte.]

al criticism is that the policy is so expansionary that it has been causing more inflation.

The hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond also spoke about the subject of inflation. I have no particular quarrel with what he said in relation to the effect of inflation on labour contracts, but he treated us to a collection of truisms in his lecture on economics. The fact of the matter is that the debate today is not on the subject of inflation but rather, given the existing degree of inflation, what should be the response in the area of labour relations, and I regret that the hon. member did not devote more of his time to that subject.

Nevertheless much of the debate has been constructive, and I think the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser) was right, for example, in pointing to the difficulties in the form of a legal settlement which was used in the Montreal longshoremen's strike, a form which led to an application to the court in proceedings analogous to those seeking an injunction. I think the decision of Chief Justice Deschênes in that case goes a long way toward establishing this procedure on firmer ground. I very much doubt whether we will have that kind of problem again. Nevertheless the means we choose to settle strikes, when parliament is occasionally called upon to intervene, must be kept under continual review.

● (1740)

I could not agree with the hon. member for Vancouver South on the reason for the address made recently in his home province by the Chief Justice of Canada. He suggested it was because of the lack of such statements by other people, members of the government in particular, that the Chief Justice had found it necessary to address himself to the subject.

The Minister of Labour (Mr. Munro) has many times, especially recently in the case of the Montreal longshoremen's strike, enunciated the supremacy of the law and his expectation that the longshoremen would return to work. The Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Goyer) found himself in a small amount of hot water for so enthusiastically proclaiming the virtues of the law in the Montreal situation, but the court quite rightly exonerated him of any attempt to interfere in the judicial process. The fact is that the government has been very strong in its position on this subject. I think it is not fair, therefore, for the hon. member for Vancouver South to suggest that this was the motive of the Chief Justice; his motive obviously was that one more authoritative voice, especially the supreme judicial voice of the country, might well be of assistance in dealing with the mood of disrespect for the law that sometimes asserts itself in various parts of the country.

Despite the constructive aspects of this debate there is, nevertheless, an over reliance on law by many of those who spoke before me. I sometimes think that we ought to have a debate in this House on the limits of the law. Certainly there is no area of human endeavour in which the law must tread more softly than the area generally described as human relations. And hon. members realize, of course, that labour relations are a particular case in the field of human relations.

The hon. member for Vancouver South fell into this error of excess in a previous debate in this House on April