

say: "The opposition tried to prevent us putting in that protection for you." This seems to me to be the height of cynicism and introduces an element of political confrontation.

For nine months CUPW has been without a contract from Treasury Board. Does anyone want to tell me that the Prime Minister got this sudden flash of insight only last week, that quite without premeditation he got the idea of bringing in a bill to make sure that CUPW would not go on strike during an election? Does anyone believe that the government has never foreseen that possibility in time to plan for it and to bring in a properly worded bill in time for it to be sent to committee where witnesses could be heard? Does anyone want to try to persuade me that the government was completely of far-sightedness in this respect? Mr. Speaker, this was planned. This was deliberate. This was cynical. This is confrontation politics and I cannot accept the principle which has been incorporated so blatantly in Bill C-45. I can see the minister shaking his head like a jack-in-the-box, but that is not what he was saying earlier today when he was stuck with this. He rolled out of bed this morning and said to his secretary: "Look what they have done."

Mr. Nystrom: When he rolled out of bed? His secretary was there?

Mr. Fraser: Explain!

Mr. Rodriguez: That is the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser) with his chauvinist remarks again. It seems to me the height of cynicism was reached when the Postmaster General said the provision of the Labour Code was being followed with respect to an election in the case of CUPW. It is phony. He gives the union the worst of the Labour Code without giving it some of the better things in it. His mind sprang immediately to clause 181 but avoided clause 148. He argued vigorously against putting CUPW under the Labour Code, but here, when it is convenient, we see it done selectively.

I feel a little twinge of sympathy for the Minister of Labour. He has tried to improve his image as the minister who has done most for labour. It is on that basis that there is the suggestion that the trade unionists ought to be weaned away from their alliance with the NDP. It is suggested that only labour ministers and labour governments can do things for labour.

● (2112)

I believe this parliament is coming to an end very quickly, and there will be a blot on the minister's escutcheon. That blot will be legislation of this kind, which is based on the principle of confrontation and removing from workers the right to strike without providing protection for the collective bargaining process. A section from another statute is suddenly being sprung upon CUPW. The government is not giving CUPW a chance to know the rules of the game. It is springing this legislation at a time when the negotiations are moving into conciliation. That confrontation politics is inviting CUPW to react by saying that parliament can pass all the bills it wants, that the

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finances are not too high and that its members will hit the bricks anyway. This way the Prime Minister can look like a real tough guy in the middle of the election campaign. The Prime Minister will be able to say: "I have them with Bill C-45", and the government will be able to enforce the legislation to the full extent of the law.

Mrs. Holt: Be honest.

Mr. Rodriguez: I wish the hon. member would get up and make a speech rather than make smart aleck remarks from the back bench.

Mrs. Holt: Say something valuable and creative.

Mr. Rodriguez: The bionic woman from the back bench is making smart aleck remarks again.

The problems involving the post office have become a long saga. There have been many disputes, and the crux of the problem has been technological change. There was a great fight over getting a technological change clause put into the collective agreement the last time around. CUPW was saying it should be given the technological change clause which is in the Canada Labour Code. A strike went on for weeks and weeks. Finally that friend of labour, Bryce Mackasey, said in my presence one morning at three o'clock that he would be prepared to lay a technological change clause on the table for CUPW. After a five-week strike Bryce Mackasey laid on the table word for word the technological change clause contained in the Canada Labour Code.

Is that the way we should operate in this country with respect to industrial relations? How can this government hope to be an example and encourage the unions in the private sector when it has the worst labour relations record in the history of this country? The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt) asked me to say something intelligent and to contribute something. I have just done so. This government is not fit to provide an example. It is not fit to lead with respect to bringing parties together to work out new forms of collective bargaining and industrial relationships. Under the present system the minister has direct control over the workers in the post office, and that leaves a lot to be desired.

As I said, there was a strike which dragged on for five or six weeks. Bryce Mackasey had claimed prior to that that the public servants of this country were the lead dogs of labour and that he was going to leash them and bring them under control. The then postmaster general, after a five or six-week strike, laid on the table a clause which would eventually solve the problem. That clause was section 129. I do not call that bargaining in good faith. Even when the workers obtained the technological change clause the Minister of Labour could have learned a lot from the way the post office was running around the ends on that one. He could have coached the Hamilton Tiger-Cats.

Mr. Gilbert: "Pussycats."