

*Labour Conditions*

playing politics with the workers' interests and with the so-called benefits of labour unions. I think that the workers are beginning to realize that they are being fooled in order to increase the prestige of some fabulously paid labour leaders.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that the workers are aware of the fact that they are the ones to foot the final bill on all disputes harmful to the whole economy and that they may be the cat's-paw, in other words, the suckers. They are too well informed these days, not to realize that the wool is being pulled over their eyes and they are only waiting for the opportunity to rightly rebel against such goings-on. They have not had many opportunities so far and I know something about it, because I have personally walked the docks of Trois-Rivières for twenty years. I have in Montreal and also in Quebec, a certain number of friends and acquaintances who give me their views on the situation and tell me, each in turn, that they would refuse, in certain circumstances, to follow their labour leaders if they were not being threatened with broken legs or being thrown into the St. Lawrence. For the enlightenment of those who think that I am dreaming this up, let me remind them of all that happened a few years back at the time of Hal Bank's union and what came out at the inquiry that the government launched later to find out what had occurred.

I say that our workers find it intolerable to see labour leaders urging them to break the law, to overlook court orders and to flout the law, because their own interests are involved, knowing that this will boomerang, that others will also scorn the law and that they, themselves, will become the victims of such contempt of law.

Mr. Speaker, under the circumstances, I think it is the government's duty to take action, which it did perhaps a little too late, in my opinion. Maybe it did not have the freedom to do it before, obviously fearing all this public protest coming from certain sectors more concerned about their personal advantage than about the commonwealth, but this is a case where the government cannot forget that the commonwealth must come before everything, that the general economy of the nation must have precedence even over the rightful interest of a group, and I think that our workers have enough common sense to understand it.

Mr. Speaker, our workers want to work; they want the government to give them work

or organize an economy where they can find employment. They want to work at reasonable wages and for that, they know that the economy must be strong, firm. There are no miracles in life and they know it. They are sufficiently well-informed nowadays to know that. It is no longer possible to make them believe that the moon is made of green cheese and they know that, at times, the government will have to intervene to protect them and that, in other cases, it will have to bring them to reason because they will have been misled by others. I think the majority of our workers are eagerly seeking that truth and that they will be happy to see that the government has the courage of its responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, I know it is unpopular to speak this way. I am also of the opinion that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Nicholson) and the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Marchand) know very well that after the statements they made there will be tomorrow a general outcry in certain fanatic and pro-labour papers and when I say pro-labour, I mean in a fanatic way, because there are papers which are pro-labour in an intelligent way. Hence, that calls for certain courage. I know also that my statements will perhaps not be popular in a certain press but I know that they reflect the feeling of the humble worker who is deprived of his wages during three or four weeks because of legal red tape and of bickering on the meaning of a word or of a sentence which enable learned lawyers to get phenomenal salaries and politicians to make the fortune of their political party, while they do not have the means to pay for their groceries during the week end.

Mr. Speaker, I will vote in favour of the bill and against the amendment of the New Democratic Party for the reasons that I have outlined and for others that I would have liked to point out. But I do not want to overtax the patience of the house, I will conclude my remarks now and repeat the words of a famous politician named Abraham Lincoln, for the benefit of those who deal with labour questions in a biased or interested manner:

● (7:40 p.m.)

[English]

You can fool some of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.