

Labour Conditions

real trouble. There is no welfare and no unemployment insurance for most. That situation has created great hardship in our community. It was expected that the settlement would be better than that which the board would allow in the Irving company case. These expectations apparently will not be met. There is a great deal of understandable concern, of chagrin, among the people in our community who have been badly affected by the strike.

There are basic causes for the board's inadequacy. I do not think either the labour movement or the NDP can escape from the consequences of their actions, or from the responsibility for some of the causes leading to the board's shortcomings. What are they?

First, the failure to put a labour representative on the board has caused some of the shortcomings of the board. I well know, as do other hon. members, that the CLC effectively blocked the appointment of a labour representative to the board. The third appointee would have served with Mr. Pepin and Mrs. Plumtre, and would have been a labour representative. I think the board in its deliberations has been less than fair to labour because labour has not been represented. This is an important factor in the board's shortcomings.

● (0040)

There is another factor that is also extremely important. That is in the whole formation of the policy the attitude that labour took when they said they would have nothing to do with it. That is unfortunate because there are things that could and would have been done had the labour movement said that because they did not like it there were some amendments that should be made. For example, I would like to have seen an amendment that would have taken contracts before January 1, 1974, right out of it. Pressure from labour would have had some effect along that line. I hope the appeal process will be corrected. I am sure that if labour had shown more interest and had gotten behind some of these changes, it would have occurred.

In spite of the reaction, not of trade union members but of the trade union movement, I call on the government to make an appointment to the board, even on a temporary basis. If that appointee is not from the trade union movement, he or she should at least be someone sympathetic to the problems of labour. That appointment should be made shortly.

The board will be hearing the terms of settlement of the IWA, the west coast settlement, which I believe is roughly 16.2 per cent. I hope they will look at this settlement very carefully, not reject it out of hand, and not lower it. There is a great deal of justice in that settlement.

I call on the government to bring in an amendment allowing for an appeal as soon as possible. I ask that the cabinet take another look at the Irving settlement, particularly if the board tends to agree with the west coast settlement.

These are the suggestions that I have made: an immediate appointment to the board, a favourable look at the west coast settlement, bringing in an amendment as soon as possible to allow for an appeal, and hearing an appeal from the union. These are the four steps that we must take.

I am very concerned about the future of labour-management relations in this country. I am concerned about the confrontation aspect that is creeping in nowadays. It is not necessary. It is not the Canadian way. It will create a great many difficulties.

There is a need for strong anti-inflation measures such as the present controls. It is extremely important that labour be part of the whole operation. We have to start taking new directions. As the Prime Minister indicated, we may want to look at the West German or Swedish models. At this point it is very important that the trade union movement, labour, be included in consultations. This confrontation business is not going to work. If there had been consultation rather than confrontation we would not be having this debate tonight.

Mr. Benjamin: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member would permit me a question.

Mr. McRae: Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to accept a question.

Mr. Benjamin: I listened very closely to the disappointment which the hon. member expressed with respect to the legislation. During the debate on the legislation, many suggestions were made to make the kinds of improvements the hon. member was talking about, but the government refused. Can the hon. member advise me whether it is correct that he supported the legislation when the bill came to a vote?

Mr. McRae: Yes, I supported the legislation. I should like to have seen some changes. I feel strongly, though, that had the trade union movement been supporting the bill it would have been easier to get some of those changes.

Mr. Benjamin: Would the hon. member permit a further question?

Some hon. Members: No!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Would the hon. member like to make a speech?

Mr. Benjamin: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Then pursuant to Standing Order 26(13) I am satisfied that the debate has been concluded, and I therefore declare the motion carried.

This House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. this day, pursuant to Standing Order 2(1).

At 12.47 a.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.