

Air Traffic Control Dispute

Mr. Raymond Langlois (Mégantic): Mr. Speaker, there is not much left for me to say. The two previous speakers have said it all much better than I could, and I agree entirely with what they said. Somebody once said that you can fool all of the people some of the time and that you can fool some of the people all of the time, but that you cannot fool all of the people all of the time. If the government would only get down to work, instead of twiddling its thumbs and beating around the bush, and discover what the real problems are, it could find a solution before the house collapses over its head.

This is not the first time that such a situation has arisen. Time and again the government has waited until the situation in question has become like a balloon ready to burst in the government's face. This is no different from the situation we saw in the railway strike, the longshoremen's strike, and other similar strikes.

The government sent a person to investigate this dispute. The opposition did not do it. In fact, the government sent a judge. But the government does not want to call him a mediator or a conciliator. The Minister of Transport has put his hand in a hat and pulled out the description of adviser for this person. That is one of the minister's natural tricks. But call him what you like, the fact remains that the government sent a man to investigate and report back to it. This man did his job in an efficient manner. He located the main trouble spot, which is the question of salaries. He made a recommendation to the government, but the government did not accept that recommendation, and has not accepted it even yet.

Why did the government send that man in the first place? Was it just a waste of time, a waste of money? Maybe the government was waiting for Christmas and figured it could then send Santa Claus.

I could recommend which minister of the government should play that role.

An hon. Member: Very funny.

● (3:00 p.m.)

Mr. Langlois (Mégantic): Mr. Speaker, it is not funny. We still do not have any kind of legislation to prevent any other situation of this kind arising. I would not be a bit surprised if in the middle of next July we were called back to settle some strike on Expo island. Why? —because this government is too incompetent. They beat around the bush and expect us to beat around the bush with them.

[Mr. Douglas.]

An hon. Member: They have a task force.

Mr. Langlois (Mégantic): If this problem is not resolved to the satisfaction of those concerned, they will end up like the rabbit that is chased around the bush. They should remember there will be somebody behind them with a sawed off shotgun, close enough to get them. I am still on the subject of the incompetency of this government—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I do not like to interrupt the hon. member, but perhaps I should remind him of the provisions of provisional standing order 15 (2a) to the effect that comment made on ministerial statements should not be designed to provoke debate. I will say no more.

Mr. Langlois (Mégantic): I quite agree with you, Mr. Speaker. In this case, however, I think the provocation sometimes comes from the other side. I only hope that what the minister has in mind, which he probably has not yet told us, will turn out to be to the benefit of all concerned. At this time, just prior to the Christmas holidays, we need all our means of transportation. I hope the government does not have in the back of its mind the use of a club, because then public opinion would be against them and not against us. I do not think this would be wise. I hope the minister and his colleagues will keep the members of the house fully and truly informed in respect of all the facts, in their effort to avoid another strike on Tuesday next.

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I am sure, after hearing the three previous speakers discuss the announcement made by the Minister of National Revenue and President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Benson), we realize we are in a very serious and critical situation. I agree with the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas) that this country does face a serious crisis, but I certainly cannot agree with all the conclusions he has reached. I am sure that he, as well as other speakers who have taken part in this discussion, would have been just as keen to criticize the government had it accepted *carte blanche* the recommendations of Judge Robinson.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There are too many interruptions in the house at the moment. I suggest the hon. member for Red Deer