

Criminal Code

government finds itself on the horns of a dilemma.

Even today if you mention that strike to farmers in western Canada their blood boils. They are the people who will eventually have to pay the price for settling it, and the rest of the economy will also suffer. There must come a time when we will have to decide whether the public interest is more sacred than the interests of a few people who, perhaps not of their own volition, become involved in arguments that cannot be satisfactorily negotiated.

Management must accept its share of responsibility. It has not done so on many occasions, but I think that generally speaking the public now realizes that after every round of strikes inflation sets in and all of us are involved in the problem. We will be resuming the budget debate in a few days time; and one of the big arguments in it will concern inflation, a problem for which governments over the last 20 years could be condemned. When inflation rises we can always attack the government.

● (5:50 p.m.)

I believe one reason that we sometimes find ourselves in this difficulty is that quite often a little group is left out of the merry-go-round, and as a result there is a power play. It seems that everyone wants a little bigger slice of the economy. No one seems to be able to strike a balance. I believe the Rand report provides us with a good reason for thinking. It would seem to me that in this country we should have now reached a point where we can face up to our responsibilities, whether we be part of management or part of labour, and whether we belong to the white collar group, the blue collar group or some other group. I think we should all be prepared generally to accept more responsibility. If we are ever to stop needing strikes and picketing we must recognize that there is a dispute involved in respect of which there must be a decision.

If I should become involved in an accident and there should be a lawsuit I know that I have a right to appeal the decision to the highest court of the land. Finally when a decision has been reached, whether or not I as an individual believe it is a proper decision, I know that that is the decision and that there is nothing I can do about it, even if I grudgingly feel an injustice has been done. I think both management and unions must some day accept this fact. Whether we call it

compulsory arbitration or something else, the fact is that there will have to be a judicial body set up to make a decision when a large segment of our society is involved in a dispute. We must have such a body which can sit down and resolve the situation, so that the other people who are involved in our economy will not suffer. It is ridiculous that 20 million people should have been involved in the longshoreman strike.

On one occasion when I visited Poland the officials in one of the departments were asked "What about strikes" and they replied "What are they." Yet every worker in that area had complaints. We have our freedom and we must be careful that we do not abuse it by employing methods that are available to us because of our better standard of living. Generally speaking, I believe there have been hundreds of strikes that would never have materialized if there had been proper negotiations.

It is interesting to note that this bill was introduced by a member of the New Democratic party. I wonder what position that party would take in the type of situation I have described. How can one be on both sides; how can one stand and say he is for this and that and everybody? We certainly do not wish to tie the hands of any worker. I have done my share of work in my lifetime, and I do not want to be put in the position where I would not be able to speak for myself or have someone else speak on my behalf.

I certainly believe, however, the time has come in this country when it is important that we look at the other side of the coin in relation to the effect these things have on the economy. If we run the economy ragged, there will not be any need for picketing. We must realize that sooner or later someone will have to stand up in this house and say the things that perhaps government is not willing to say. Someone, if not a whole party, must be willing to stand up here and say some of the things which many of the people of this country are thinking.

Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw): I should like very briefly to say to the hon. member who preceded me that the agriculture economy has its destiny in its own hands. In the constituency I represent we have a 50-50 split between the farming section and the urban section. We experience absolutely no problem in getting the two groups, the farmer and the urban dweller, to work together. Their problems are alike.