

*Air Traffic Control Dispute*

the crisis is at its peak. If legislation is introduced then, we will have to start fighting to put sense into the legislation.

● (4:10 p.m.)

I think one of the main purposes of a debate is that it would permit this government to listen to the views of the opposition in respect of what is becoming an urgent matter. At regular intervals we are faced with the same crisis—a strike threat here, a strike threat there, a strike here and a strike there. I think it is better that we try to control the disease instead of trying to provide a cure after it is at its peak. I cannot think of a more crucial or urgent matter which necessitates our immediate attention. At this time of the year particularly, we cannot permit ourselves to become involved in an air line strike. First of all, we would look like a bunch of nitwits here and, second, we cannot afford it. This is a very urgent matter and I strongly recommend this debate so that we can express our views on this matter to the government.

**Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Revelstoke):** Mr. Speaker, with the other developments which have taken place since yesterday and the fact that the strike vote now has taken place, I think we are in order to move that a debate on this proposed stoppage be held at the present time. In our democracy we cannot predict the results of a free vote. The time is crucial. The government has a right to be concerned about the amounts recommended in the proposed settlement. We know they were not sufficiently concerned about the amount settled upon in the Montreal dock strike. This was very forcibly brought to their attention by all groups in the opposition. In effect, what has happened has been that the government has learned from the opposition to be a little more wary. I think we should congratulate them on this ability to learn. We should be concerned about the cost of air transport in Canada. Air Canada has just underwritten one of the most expensive experiments ever undertaken in the entire world in its agreement to buy supersonic aircraft. This is a development which has been relatively unnoticed in this house and yet it is one the cost of which is fantastic. We need to show more concern about this than has been shown up until now.

It is interesting to note that the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas) has advocated what has amounted almost to a proposal to raise the status of any mediator or conciliator automatically to that of an arbitrator. This is a policy which is not in accord

with his party's avowed stand on compulsory arbitration. However, if we could bring that about in this way it might be the thing which would improve our system of dealing with strikes. We would simply appoint a mediator and both sides would be bound by whatever he decided, because surely what fits the left foot also must fit the right foot.

I should like to add one more point on this matter of urgency. We are in a crisis. It is ironic that the anniversary of the birth of the Prince of Peace also should be the reason of labour strife. The distortion produced in our economy by the Christmas season is a problem which we well might send to the Canadian Economic Council for consideration.

**Mr. Heward Graffey (Brome-Missisquoi):** Mr. Speaker, in speaking very briefly to the point of urgency, I should like to say that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) in opening up this discussion of urgency referred to the fact that this parliament did not wish to be faced with a *fait accompli*. It might be argued that the government wants to put a resolution on the order paper so that we can debate the issue soon, but this is just what we in the opposition wish to avoid. The government's credibility in respect of settling labour matters has been seriously endangered over the past months and years because it has intervened on one side and sometimes on the other. If the urgency of debate is recognized, then this house can have a full and frank discussion of this crisis situation. It is very possible that by this means we might avoid the necessity for the kind of legislation that would only exacerbate the labour-management-government situation. The hon. member for Bow River (Mr. Woolliams) time and time again in this parliament over the last weeks and months—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Graffey:** You know, when a government feels guilty they always joke and make light of a situation; when they are pushing their heads in the sand, they laugh. In respect of our repeated request for management-labour-government legislation, the government has promised us a task force. When the late President Kennedy spoke of a task force he meant experts all across the nation.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Does the hon. member not feel that he now is getting to some extent away from the question of the urgency of debate.