

*Labour Dispute at Montreal*

other organizations across Canada are going to be vitally interested and will be expressing their alarm with respect to this state of affairs if they have not already done so. It is interesting to note that the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, meeting in Regina last week adopted a resolution in these terms:

—that they should continue to seek changes in Canadian labour legislation to prevent disruption of unrelated economic activities through work stoppages in major industries.

It was suggested that some form of labour-management court might be required.

So, Mr. Speaker, with these very few remarks I would like to endorse what has already been said, namely, that we are in a state of emergency and that the government, which is responsible for alleviating it and solving the problem, should take the urgent steps that are being suggested.

**Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour):**

Mr. Speaker, there was one remark made by the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot (Mr. Ricard) with which I can agree. I may not agree with some of the extravagant language that he used when moving his motion, but when this matter was being put to the house I made it quite clear that I am in complete agreement with him that the situation is a serious one. It certainly is not one that can be passed over lightly and I would not want him or any other hon. members to think that it has not received serious, careful consideration and action over a period of several weeks not only from me and my department but from the government generally.

As I listened to the speeches this morning, Mr. Speaker, I felt that at least some of the hon. members who participated in the debate had short memories. There was not a single reference to the fact that the very first day this dispute was raised in the house I, as the minister, outlined a course which I thought was the sound and proper one to be followed.

The hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (Mr. Allmand), who participated in the debate this morning, did interest himself several days ago when he first asked about the dispute on the docks. He referred to it as a wildcat dispute. On that occasion I said that I had received certain representations in a telegram from the Montreal port council. As recorded on page 4181 of *Hansard* for November 13, some 11 days ago, the telegram which I sent in reply to one received from

[Mr. Southam.]

Mr. William Baatz, the president of the Montreal port council, read as follows:

• (2:40 p.m.)

Referring your telegram tenth the collective agreements governing longshoring activities in the Saint Lawrence ports provide for arbitration of grievances. The fact that the agreements have been amended as a result of the Picard report does not affect said arbitration provisions. In view of this and of the urgency of the situation I have sent the following telegram to the Shipping Federation of Canada and the International Longshoremen's Association.

"I am proposing herein to the Shipping Federation of Canada and the International Longshoremen's Association that they agree to the appointment of an arbitrator to be chosen by me to make final and binding decisions with effect until December thirty-first nineteen sixty seven on the issues which have affected shipping operations at the port of Montreal... With the end of the active shipping season near and the year-end holiday season fast approaching, it is imperative that full waterfront operations resume at the earliest time. I would appreciate your immediate advice so that arbitration can proceed."

That telegram went out, as I have said, about 11 days ago to the interested parties. The reason I suggested arbitration will be obvious to anyone with any knowledge of collective bargaining procedure, several of whom I see in this house.

**Mr. Starr:** Would the minister permit a question at this point? What replies did he receive from the parties to whom he sent the telegram?

**Mr. Nicholson:** I will be dealing with that in the course of my remarks.

**Mr. Starr:** I thought you might deal with them now to complete the picture.

**Mr. Nicholson:** I will deal with them in an orderly way.

**Mr. Starr:** It would be orderly to deal with them now.

**Mr. Nicholson:** The reason I suggested arbitration should be perfectly obvious to anyone with any knowledge of how the collective bargaining process works in this country. My remarks will also make it clear why the position of the Minister of Labour differs in this dispute from his position in most disputes which attract headlines in newspapers and the news media in this country.

The ordinary dispute between labour and management usually comes about after a collective agreement has expired and there is no agreement in force. That was the situation we were dealing with in the spring or early