

Canada Labour Code

These establishments, though usually sufficiently financed for and geared to the local economy, cannot afford to waste any money or time. They operate without frills and are devoid of any fringes of extravagance or pretension. Usually the remuneration of employees is commensurate with the amount of business that the mill does per week, and with the tonnage output sometimes a governing factor. I do not see any excuse for the long fingers of federal authority to suddenly grasp and strangle the frugal economy of the local, independent feed mill. I have here a communication from one family operated mill in my area and I wish to put the remarks of the owner on the record at this time. He says:

We feel that this bill should not apply to local feed mills, which in most cases 50 per cent or better of our business is retail. Some feed businesses in Ontario do not have any machinery. In this case I suppose they would come under the province instead of the dominion government.

I would suppose so, too:

We are definitely opposed to a 40 hour work week and opposed to being under federal labour jurisdiction while other places of business in our area are under provincial. I think we must have been grouped in with terminal and western elevators accidentally.

The communication that he sends from the Ontario retail feed dealers association also raises various points which I should like to place on the record at this time. They are as follows:

Through announced decision of the federal Minister of Labour all feed mills and grain elevators in Ontario will become subject to provisions of the proposed Canada labour (standards) code. With stated applicability to "federal works, undertakings and businesses" it was surprising to learn that feed and grain elevator operations of all kinds were being so classified for purposes of this labour legislation. Inability to obtain any explanation for declaring local feed mills and elevators to be "works for the general advantage of Canada" it can only be assumed that such businesses were accidentally grouped with terminal and western elevators licensed under the Canada Grain Act.

Then they say:

Opposition to enforced involvement under this legislation is not based on any wish or desire to restrict the earning power of employees of member firms.

I know that many of these firms pay far more than what would accrue from a 40 hour week at \$1.25 an hour:

The operation of an average feed mill or local grain elevator does not lend to shift work or the employment of casual labour at peak production periods or seasonal pressures that occur during harvesting seasons. Operational skills that are only gained through training and experience are required for successful plant performance and customer servicing. Key employees cannot be relieved

by inexperienced labour during rush periods nor can plants afford anything less than the fullest utilization of available manpower.

They go on with another point:

Another point to be borne in mind is that this is the initial step taken toward government control over payrolls and working conditions on a national basis. Before the act has been approved by parliament, powerful labour organizations are clamouring for higher minimum rate of pay than that provided for under the present bill.

Largely situated in rural areas or among the less populated centres of the province, local feed mills and grain elevators are not required to compete with large industrial centres for their labour requirements. If forced to operate under jurisdiction of the federal labour code, mills and elevators so situated would be automatically deprived of an opportunity to take advantage of labour pay rates that prevail locally.

Perhaps the most unreasonable feature of the minister's ruling to this section of industry is that members of the local feed and grain trade are being placed under federal labour jurisdiction, while unrelated business operations of local character are subject only to provincial labour regulations.

I submit, Mr. Chairman, that that type of local, independently operated feed mill should be in a similar category to the general store across the road or any other small village retail outlet.

Regarding the trucking industry I have received another communication from an independent trucker and mover in my area which I should like to put before the committee. He says:

I am most concerned about Bill C-126 introduced before the House of Commons in the month of October. Certain proposals incorporated in this bill can only result in serious and costly delays for many thousands of citizens moving household effects.

I strongly urge that suitable amendments be made in this bill, which incidentally has already received its second reading. I present the following economic facts for your consideration:

(a) The limitation of 40 hours per week will seriously affect the economic welfare of our employees due to the short, concentrated moving season, June to September.

(b) The limitation of 40 hours per week will be highly injurious and discriminatory to operators of interprovincial van services, (not all companies operate interprovincially) and discrimination is contrary in the principles of Canadian civil rights.

(c) The economic use of manpower would be seriously hampered by the restriction of an eight hour day thus increasing substantial amount and thereby increase the cost of living.

(d) Speed of transportation is a necessary factor in today's economy; if this bill is passed it will prolong the time taken from point to point at the inconvenience of the public.

(e) The restrictions to the hours of employment would result in higher costs for the movement of armed forces personnel, a cost that would undoubtedly fall upon the taxpayers.

(f) Many moves, even local removals, entail hours of work in excess of an eight hour day.