

Feed Grain

the elevators does deteriorate, to substitute new supplies for the old.

But already, this again shows how poorly the central government may be equipped, may lack the instruments required to face the consequences, which are always foreseeable of conflicts such as the one we are now up against.

In conclusion, I should like to cast a look to the future.

Tomorrow, farmers will have to be compensated for the higher costs this conflict has imposed upon them. Above all else, the government must, in the future, be ready to mitigate the effects of similar situations; it must adopt, in advance, measures of a permanent nature which are worthy of the government, and worthy of the social and economic leadership our people are entitled to expect.

And on another level, over and above that of the present conflict, the federal and provincial governments will once and for all have to define the nature of labour relations in Canada, especially, as the fact has been brought out so well, in the public sector.

A labour court will ultimately have to be established before which parties to a conflict in the public sector will necessarily have to appear for a final settlement; such a settlement, if not accepted by one or the other of the two parties, shall be imposed. The idea of such a court is not to suppress the right to strike, but to subject it to the common good when a strike has lasted too long.

The people are fed up, I should say really fed up, with the eternal perpetuation of conflicts in the public sector, as well as with those trade unionists and, I insist, those employers who have an innate tendency to hold the public as hostages.

Such, Madam Speaker, are the few objective reflections that I wanted to pass on to this assembly, and I sincerely hope that they will find their concrete application in the decisions made by the Government.

Mr. Yves Caron (Beauce): Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure and with great interest that I take part in this emergency debate that was requested because of the urgent, and rather dramatic situation that has prevailed these last ten days in the ports of Quebec City, Trois-Rivières and Montreal and which has the effect of interfering with feed grain supplies because of a longshoremen strike.

Madam Speaker, I do not speak often in this House, and believe me it is not because I am not aware of the problems facing my country; on the contrary, but every member somehow has his personal philosophy and mine is, on the one hand, that I believe more in action than in great speeches and, on the other hand, that this House is made up of an impressive number of members with a long experience of politics who can afford to make learned an eloquent speeches.

However, today I have a reason to speak because I would not want the voters in my riding, and particularly in Quebec, who elected some sixty liberal members, to have the impression that the opposition is the only group to stand for the interest of producers. The hon. member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle) and the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) speak on behalf of Quebec. We are indeed some sixty liberal members from Quebec and

[Mr. Wagner.]

several of us come from rural ridings and find just as much interest in this matter as evidenced in recent days by myself and the hon. member for Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine (Mr. Béchard), the hon. member for Charlevoix (Mr. Lapointe) and the hon. member for Laval (Mr. Roy) who pleaded directly in this House with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) and who showed they wanted as much as I do a quick solution to that serious problem of grain supplies.

Madam Speaker, first I want to say to this House that I am not against strikes but like any other sensible person I think there are limits which must be imposed when the common good is threatened and at present, Madam Speaker, the common good is threatened in Quebec.

A reply was sent to me by the Minister of Agriculture Tuesday, April 8, last, because I told them that Quebec grain elevators were empty and producers were becoming alarmed, and rightly so. Since then and before asking that question I received several telegrams from organizations in my constituency asking me to appeal to the minister and during the weekend, several producers of raw milk and manufacturing milk came to meet me at my office and asked me to appeal directly to the minister and the whole government and ask them to take an early decision to settle the problem—as it is done for example when western supplies are threatened—either through legislation or otherwise.

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The government is not indifferent to the problems of western farmers and eastern consumers, as suggested by members opposite. Let us only take as example Bill C-19 providing for a double price system for wheat grown and sold in Canada. This bill has now reached third reading in the House and if the opposition acts in good faith as it claims, it should prove it to the producer and consumer by hastening to support that bill which will greatly encourage western producers generally and Quebec consumers more particularly.

Madam Speaker, as a Quebecker, I deeply realize what can be the effects of such a strike, especially for the Quebec agriculture during the months to come and I know that it will eventually be reflected in higher prices if it is not immediately settled, which will first affect the producers and then Quebec consumers. This is why I eagerly hope that the matter will be settled as quickly as possible.

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Madam Speaker, I think it is my duty to support the initiative of the opposition members in this emergency debate for the supply of feed grains to Eastern Canada, particularly to the province of Quebec, through ports now closed in Quebec City, Montreal and Trois-Rivières.

Since the beginning of the debate tonight, thanks to the initiative, among others, of the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert), who came back charging on several occasions, we have heard many different theories, excuses or attacks, but, Madam Speaker, we are still at the same point where we were at 8 o'clock, when the debate started. The means of the Parliament in an emergency situation recognized by the four parties in the House are the organization of an emergency debate; it is the only means avail-