

## VIDEOTAPING OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell):** Mr. Speaker, if you were to seek unanimous consent you would find it for the approval of the following motion:

I move:

That the Standing Committee on Human Rights and the Status of Disabled Persons, be authorized to permit videotaping of its public hearings at the Akwesasne Reserve on November 19, 1991, pursuant to Standing Order 119(1).

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

## WAGE CLAIM PAYMENT ACT

## MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Blais that Bill C-22, an act to enact the Wage Claim Payment Act, to amend the Bankruptcy Act and to amend other acts in consequence thereof be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Government Operations, and the amendment of Mr. Rodriguez.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Jim Edwards (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your courtesy and I assure my friends opposite that I will be very brief with my one question.

I want to ask my hon. colleague for Thunder Bay—Nipigon one question relating to the Route Canada bankruptcy which he described so well.

Does the hon. member feel that the availability of super priority such as has been advocated by members of his party would have assisted the employees of Route Canada, and would he not agree that the wage protection plan as envisaged in Bill C-22 would do a far more

*Government Orders*

expeditious job providing certainty of wage compensation to those employees?

**Mr. Comuzzi:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that question from my colleague. Yes, the legislation as it is presently written, would assist the former employees of Route Canada but only a little bit.

We are finding that the former employees of CNR who transferred to Route Canada Incorporated without benefit of the right to say if they wanted to go or not were assured that their contract rights with CNR would transfer to the new employer. Those contract rights, which included termination pay of one week's salary for every year worked, holiday pay, pension benefits, severance pay, and so on, were not compensated for in the bankruptcy. There were no assets left in Route Canada Incorporated to pay the employees what was rightfully due to them.

Super priority would have helped a little bit.

**An hon. member:** Yes it would help.

**Mr. Comuzzi:** What was happening with those Route Canada employees, former CNR employees, is that most of them are out \$25,000, \$35,000 and \$40,000 because of the long term of service they gave CNR. That is what is owed to them under the terms of the employment contract from Canada Labour, plus the union contract that was negotiated. It is their right and it is what they are entitled to and it is what CNR in the sale to Route Canada has forbidden these employees to collect.

That is the inequity. That is the injustice. That is what I would hope this legislation would correct.

• (1830)

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in this debate today on Bill C-22. First of all I want to congratulate the hon. member for Dartmouth who was the lead critic for our party and who, Mr. Speaker as you undoubtedly will remember from his remarks yesterday, demonstrated tremendous knowledge in this area, knowledge that he has acquired of course through studying this bill very carefully.

The bill we are dealing with has gone through an unusual process, and I will admit it. This whole business of pre-study is a novel one. I think it has been most beneficial and I recommend it to the government for future bills. Mind you, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the government listens to more of the advice of members when it tries this again. Actually I hope the government