

Industrial Relations Act

With respect to the government he says at page 82 of his report:

It is only when the economy is sluggish and when government action has been inadequate or ineffective to strengthen it that technological innovations bring unfortunate consequences to individuals.

What then are the other measures which should be considered in introducing legislation of this nature in order to deal with the entire problem? First of all, I would suggest that the government should expand the scope of the manpower consultative service so that it can intervene at the earliest stages to assist in working out solutions to these problems. In the United States the government has established committees representing government, labour and management to work out the problems related to technological innovations. As a result of this automation has been introduced in some cases without the loss of a single job. Some workers have been retrained, some reassigned and some upgraded. This was possible because they considered the problems at an early enough stage.

These committees have found that the introduction of automation can be a human as well as a technical success if certain guide lines are followed. In this regard I should like to refer to a report made by Arthur Goldberg, former Secretary of Labour in the United States, as reported in the *New York Times* on April 2, 1961. He was referring to the guide lines that are necessary in the introduction of technological change. Mr. Goldberg says that there must be an adequate lead time between the decision to automate and the actual changeover and that there must be sufficient consultation between labour and management concerning employee displacement and job changes. He says there must be a general and honest report to the people directly affected and, most important of all, the time of the change must coincide with a period of employment or market expansion.

● (5:30 p.m.)

In addition to the formation of these tripartite committees the government could also assist in several other ways. I am thinking of worker retraining and mobility. It is true that the government has already taken action on these matters under its manpower program and is also attempting to provide more co-ordination by establishing a manpower department. I feel that this is a tremendous step forward. Many of us will be watching to see the effect of this measure.

[Mr. Allmand.]

The government, Mr. Speaker, must extend and co-ordinate its war on poverty program to assist those areas particularly affected by industrial innovation and change. If the government were to intervene before the changeover and early enough in the process it could possibly take steps to prevent the abandonment of towns with its accompanying uprooting of families and social disorders. Through government assistance it may be possible to keep industries and employment in some of these towns. This may be done by providing better transportation, technical schools and in other ways.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend the mover of this resolution. My only criticism is that this problem should not be considered in isolation but along with other measures which are being introduced and which can be introduced in this same area.

Mr. B. S. Mackasey (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour): I was particularly interested, Mr. Speaker, to find that the hon. member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Fawcett) is a fellow member who served his initiation in the labour movement amongst the unions which dominate, quite properly, the railways of Canada. While the hon. member for Nickel Belt is a product of the running trades, I am one of those unfortunates who served a five year apprenticeship in what was referred to in those days as "the shops". Perhaps more tragically I am also a victim, if one wants to use that word, of a decision made by Canadian National Railways at the outset of the war in 1939 or 1940 arbitrarily to close what was known in those days as the St. Malo shop, with which I am sure the hon. member for Nickel Belt is familiar. Hundreds of families in Quebec city were uprooted with very little prior notice and told to reestablish themselves in Montreal to work in the Pointe St. Charles shop.

I can remember quite vividly, Mr. Speaker, the emotional impact such a move had upon those families in 1940. We were emerging from the depression years. Jobs were still fairly scarce. We were uprooted from our familiar surroundings and transferred into an area of hostility. The hostility came from the workers at the Pointe St. Charles shop. It was quite normal because our arrival by the hundreds on the local scene created a tremendous disruption in such fundamental things as seniority rights, the dovetailing of this and that job and so on. The fact that my own father died within months of the transfer has always left me with the impression,