

evidence that this board was very careful, and that Professor Weldon made a reasoned study of this whole matter.

My own personal feeling is that the chairman of the conciliation board came up with his figure because it was half way between the other two, but did not make the effort that Professor Weldon made. When one looks at the differences in the thicknesses of the two reports it is not hard to realize that Professor Weldon devoted more time and effort than anyone else on that board.

May I close by urging hon. members not to subvert the wider public interest by legislating unfair and unjust wage conditions on those railway workers we are sending back to work.

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please. Hon. members of the committee have heard the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre.

● (2210)

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Chairman, we now have the amendment from the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre. He is indicating Weldon at 10.8 per cent, I take it, and is recommending Weldon the second year between 10 per cent and 11 per cent. We anticipate from the Conservative Party 34 cents for the non-ops in the first year which, if you want to translate it into percentage points, is about 9.6. They have developed their rationale for that. The hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre has developed his rationale. I understand that before the night is over the Social Credit Party will have its variation in respect of what the wage package should be. This is briefly where we are now. We are engaged in an auction while the strike is on. Every party will have its varied and different position with regard to what it feels is just.

The hon. member asked me what I felt was fair and just. It is not for the government or myself to determine what is fair and just in this particular case right here.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Surely what is for us to decide in Parliament is how we can inaugurate a process, the best in our imagination, to guarantee a fair and just result in terms of wages and all the other rights. Perhaps in answer to the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre when he asked me whether I consider Weldon—I think that is how he put it—at 10.8 per cent is a fair and just determination, I should say I do not know. Maybe in the view of others, the chairman, the companies and so on, who were involved in all the hearings to which I was not a party, it is too low. Also I might add maybe it is too high. But that is not the point that we are here to determine. We are here to determine what is the fairest and most equitable process by which we can guarantee that the non-ops, the shopcrafts and the trainmen after final determination, undoubtedly by an arbitrator, can get a complete package in terms of wages and the other considerations that will be in the hands of the arbitrator we are talking about.

There is the question of job security. We have talked about pensions. I will have suggestions later tonight in terms of amendments to guarantee improvements in these particular areas by special reference to the arbitrator,

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letting him know that this Parliament wants him to look at them. There are other ways to do it. We could have a special reference in the legislation directing the attention of the arbitrator to certain areas which concern parliamentarians.

The non-ops are concerned about catch-up. The allegation is that their basic rates are too low and that percentages do not favour them. Maybe there is some validity to that. However, that question is not on the floor of the House for us to determine. There can be a reference to the arbitrator to look into questions of this kind and make his determination. In the meantime we have the chairman's report in each case as the base. If we pay that now, the workers will receive it retroactively based on that recommendation. They will get it while the arbitrator is at work.

However, in respect of all these other questions as to whether the base rates are too low, whether the relationships between the non-ops and other groups is correct or not, and whether the levels between the non-ops and other occupations of the railways are equivalent to other similar and analogous classifications in the private sector, these are all questions which surely, on the floor of parliament, we are not qualified to determine. We can ensure by reference to the arbitrator that consideration will be given to these questions.

I said yesterday, on the introduction of the bill, that I would expect automatically that the first thing the arbitrator would take into account would be the cost of living since the date of the conciliation report. So, why do we have to negotiate this on the floor of the House? We now have the bidding system in respect of 34 cents and 38 cents, and we have not yet studied the suggestion of the Social Credit Party. Why do we not let the arbitrator decide it?

I wonder whether anyone has considered the implications of what might happen in terms of labour disputes relative to this parliament and labour disputes falling within federal jurisdiction. By the time this bidding system is over tonight, and if there should be a variation of the procedure in the bill, I would try to convince all those people who believe in free collective bargaining that the procedure in this legislation is the best defence against the advocates of compulsory arbitration. I will tell you why.

If we start negotiating on the floor of this House, and making our own subjective judgments instead of leaving it to the other process, then the worker may decide that he can get a better deal from the parliamentarians on the floor of parliament. Why then should he go through the conciliation process and receive a conciliation chairman's report which often forms the basis for the settlement arrived at later? The parties to the dispute may say that parliament is prepared to enter the picture and make suggestions. I think in this way we would have added another step to the whole process.

The parties involved may say: let us go through negotiation, through mediation and through conciliation, and then let us go to parliament on them all. I would think that those who advocate the bidding system here should in the future be fair and honest enough to accept some responsibility if this should be a start down the road to many more labour disputes coming to the floor of parlia-