

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

their attempt to establish an export marketing agency. As I have said many times, I welcome this. But I know, and so do they, that they will have to meet the competitive position in the world market, which includes arrangements for shipping so that they are competitive on that basis as well. This is a very important part of delivering grain, arranging for shipping from the export point to the delivery point at the lowest possible cost. My friend knows how important it is to arrange for shipping in advance in order to obtain the service at competitive cost.

I do not have time to go into detail, Mr. Speaker, but I reject the hon. members accusations that we are trying to break the Canadian Wheat Board. In my view, the function of the Canadian Wheat Board and other agencies is to continually and constantly promote sales in the markets we have.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the Minister, but his time has expired.

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE—
CONSIDERATION OF PAYMENT
FOR OVERTIME

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on behalf of 12,000 Canadians, 9,800 who are regular members and the remainder public service and other supporting staff for the finest police force in the world, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. We have often seen municipal police forces in different parts of Canada engaged in activities such as policing ball games and that sort of thing. It may be of interest to know that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police do municipal police work in 145 municipalities across Canada. For this work they receive no overtime pay. It is overtime pay that brings the illustrious Solicitor General (Mr. McLraith) and myself into confrontation this evening. The commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, W. L. Higgitt, put it this way at page 7 of No. 16 of the Minutes of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs:

We are one of the last police organizations in Canada—I hope it can remain that way, but I do not see how it can for much longer—certainly of any major size, at least, that does not have overtime compensation. We simply do not have compensation for overtime and last year we put in an equivalent of 2,068 man years of overtime or something over 3.75 million hours of overtime for which there is no compensation at all.

At page 10 he said:

I think we are the only police organization in Canada where management is still speaking for [Mr. Olson.]

the men. I think we always have been successful in getting a pretty good deal for our members, and so long as that exists I do not foresee that this system needs change.

Prior to this pay increase—

He was speaking of the last pay increase of the RCMP.

—from a pay point of view we were about 17th in the scale of police pay in Canada. I am basing that on the pay of a first-class constable. This pay increase brought us up to where we are tied at this moment for second place, which is not a very unhealthy place to be. However, it is a little unrealistic for me to say this because you will recall that I just said we put in last year something in excess of 2,000 man-years of overtime, for which there is no pay at all. When I say that we are tied for second place, that is only in basic pay—

You see what I mean, Mr. Speaker.

● (10:10 p.m.)

—because every other police force in Canada gets fairly handsome overtime allowances and payments which we do not enjoy at all. So while I say we are tied, that is only in a basic pay way. If it was really take-home pay and we actually could examine the take-home pay of the various constables, we probably would find that we had dropped down considerably from the second position.

When I asked the witness at page 16:13 a question about the overtime problem, he answered in part:

—we are still nowhere near the top pay across the land if we take overtime pay of other forces into account. We are not, at this moment, pushing an overtime case. If I could answer it that way.

Finally, at page 16:14 of the Minutes of Evidence there is a reference to a 4 per cent attrition rate in the force. I wondered whether that related to lack of overtime pay or not. I then asked this question:

I am just wondering, Mr. Chairman, how the commissioner proposes to solve this overtime problem. If he is not asking for 20 per cent more men and he is not vigorously pursuing a question of overtime payments, where is the solution?

I should say here, parenthetically, that I estimated that the men worked more than 16 per cent of their time as overtime, and Commissioner Higgitt calculated that the overtime work amounted to something like 20 per cent of their time. So that is one answer to the question I have put on record. Answering the question I asked of him on page 16:14, Commissioner Higgitt said:

There are two answers to that. One is that I am sure that we are not going to have to pursue this overtime matter before too long as a separate item. However, I should like to be able to think that we can take cognizance of this in our general pay packages each time. If our men can see that