

Supply—Labour

It is not true that labour has been able to stop technological change. One of the best illustrations of this fact is the situation in the railway industry regarding the reduction in the number of employees. In 1952 the railway non-operating unions represented 152,000 workers whereas in 1966 the railways are moving more traffic than ever before with only 90,000 workers. This represents a reduction of 60 per cent. It is obvious that the railways have been able to reduce their staffs through technological change. The unions have not prevented this change, but what they have said and will continue to say with justification is that the changes must be worked out through consultation so that the workers will not have to bear the entire burden.

I should now like to quote a few lines from the official summary of Mr. Justice Freedman's report prepared by him. He said at page 3 of his findings and conclusions:

Assuming voluntary agreement between the parties is not possible for the purpose of giving effect to the commission's recommendation, legislation would be required. Either the Railway Act or the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act could be employed. If the latter were used it would be possible to provide, by an appropriate amendment, that any technological innovation, development or change proposed by the employer which would materially and adversely affect the working conditions of the employees should either be deferred for negotiation at the next open period or be dealt with in the same way as if it were a provision falling within the scope of subsection (2) of section 22 of the act.

He goes on to spell out what this means in a technical way:

Amendment through the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act would have the advantage of closing a gap in the statute which technological advance has revealed.

It is not good enough for the minister to make nice speeches here or speeches of the kind he made on May 19 in Vancouver to the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. At that time he ostensibly dealt with the Freedman report but did not once mention the fact that Mr. Justice Freedman had suggested changes in the legislation. I think this bears out the suggestion that an individual can take out of any report exactly what he wants to take out of it.

It is time for the minister and the government to face up to the implications of technological change and what this means to working people. They must also face up to the implications of the recommendations of Mr. Justice Freedman and bring in legislation

which will permit real bargaining and orderly and sensible changes in working conditions so that the whole burden does not fall upon the shoulders of the working people of Canada. That is all they want, and if the minister brings in such legislation I assure him that the members of this group will give him the majority he needs, the lack of which he was complaining about earlier. If the minister brought forward that kind of legislation he would remove one of the greatest reasons behind the strikes which are taking place today.

I want to deal with just one more matter at this time. The minister spoke with a good deal of pride about the Canada Labour (Standards) Code. If ever there was a hoax perpetrated on the people of Canada it was that perpetrated by the implementation of this code. I do not understand why the minister and the government continue to be proud of it. In answer to a question I placed on the order paper early this session we were told that the federal government spent over \$185,000 in advertising the provisions of the Canada Labour (Standards) Code. The provisions were explained by the use of newspapers, magazines, radio and television, and I am sure hon. members will remember the full-page advertisements which included a picture of the former minister extolling the virtues of the act. It was not actually a picture of the minister but a drawing which looked remarkably like him. What has been accomplished by this measure? Let us be realistic about it. Roughly 500,000 workers in Canada who were already receiving \$1.25 per hour before the code was passed come within the jurisdiction of the federal government. The \$1.25 minimum wage provision has therefore had virtually no effect. The other main provisions of the code relate to the 40-hour week and time and a half for overtime.

After a great deal of digging and study we now have a list of industries and companies which asked for deferment of the 18-month period in respect of hours and overtime. I am not going to read the entire list because it would take me all day but I will indicate the type of industries that are listed. In respect of the minimum wages provision we have listed flour and feed mills, the highway transport industry, the radio and television industry and the shipping industry. In respect of hours of work and overtime—it would take me longer to read this list—we have almost every air transport company except Air Canada, the