

*Legislation Respecting Railway Matters*

we were receiving the same evasive, the same irresponsible answers.

I think the Canadian people have had enough of those ways of administering the country, of that trend given to Canadian politics and the economy. We want action and frankness not only in words but in action, we want the government and public men to grapple directly with problems and to take efficient measures so as to arrive at a settlement before the mountain brings forth all its grievances and all its uneasiness.

The railway companies also, Mr. Speaker, have not assumed all their responsibilities, because they did not offer definite wages and labour conditions, leaving to the central government the burden of paying the bill, of showing imagination and leadership. That is why in that conflict, at the table of negotiations, the ghost presence of the central government could be felt.

In the face of that situation, considering the discussion on the strike in general, on the strike in the public services, the principles connected with the railway strike which must be settled rapidly, as a result of those considerations, it is in order to suggest a few reforms in the part we must play as legislators. That is our main function here in this parliament. We are not here to multiply political partisanship. We are not here to bring up like popcorn being made the positions taken by a political party when in the opposition if it takes the opposite position when in power. We are here to legislate and, in the field of labour, it is urgent, Mr. Speaker, to bring forth reforms.

I want to submit to the attention of this house a few reforms and I would greatly appreciate it if the government would consider them with all the other recommendations and judicious suggestions submitted by other members during the present debate.

First, it is urgent to set up an adequate labour legislation. Second, we need labour-management courts able to decide fairly with regard to professional conflicts.

Third, until we get that appropriate legislation and those labour-management courts, we must leave management and labour free to exercise their defence rights, namely the right to strike or appeal.

In addition, in the process of evolution, civil conflicts are settled today by the courts, whereas at the beginning of the world individuals took justice into their own hands. In the era of the cavemen, if another man stole his neighbour's cattle, there were no

courts. The offended party took justice into his own hands: the right to own things. And that right goes with the right to defend oneself and that right must be exercised until the day when appropriate legislation and courts exist. Then the exercise of that right of defence in civil and criminal matters is given to the duly constituted courts which we have today.

That is why I say that the right to strike or lockout is temporary until we have adequate legislation and courts. It is false to think that the right to strike in itself or the lockout is absolute, eternal and unlimited. The responsibility falls on the state and on us legislators to create legislation and labour-management courts.

It is also incumbent on the state to promote the creation of organizations which will create a balance in the economic and social fields between the state, management and labour.

Here is my fourth reform or suggestion. I propose the setting up of a wisemen court which a national management confederation and a general labour confederation should put to work. I am thinking in particular of an organization similar to the labour market commission in Sweden.

That organization which we could set up should take into account our Canadian and constitutional characteristics. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon a few allusions were made to Sweden. I am not talking at all about the political system, socialist or otherwise, of Sweden.

But when we look squarely at the problems, we can take good ideas in every country and every political creed. We can take an idea or a structure which gave excellent results for the common good of a country without for all that accepting the philosophy or political theories of the Swedish government, since that one was mentioned this afternoon, if it is really a socialist government.

There is a wisemen court there which is called the labour market commission. It was created in 1937 between a national management confederation and a national labour confederation.

And I reach this point to say, as I pointed out a while ago, that in this dispute the unions also have some responsibilities, as well as the employers, the management, in Canada. At this time, in the dispute we are facing eight railway companies; on the other hand, we have 16 or 18 unions formed into