

the Canadian Wheat Board, to the Department of External Affairs. He was appointed to a position—I do not know his correct title; whether it is with the Soviet trade desk or whatever it is called—in the Department of External Affairs. His particular job will be to do everything he can to facilitate trade between Canada and the Soviet Union, including doing what he can, with others, to improve the market for Soviet goods in Canada. I think that is a constructive step forward, and I would hope that governments would look at the Canadian Wheat Board system with that kind of marketing arrangement as not only the best way to market Canadian grain but as also containing within it elements of a system which might help bring about a better balance.

When Frank Rowan takes up this position and talks to the Soviets, they will know him and have confidence in him. I think that a man of his stature, fully bilingual, raised in this part of Canada, and having spent most of his working life in western Canada, is an ideal person to undertake this particular program.

• (1610)

This is not the precise matter now before the Senate, but I think it is essential that the system we have in place be used to improve and expand trade with our biggest grain market.

**Senator Turner:** Let us be honest about it, labour relations are nothing more than human relations.

Why did the Department of Labour allow this dispute to go on for four years with no contract? Technological change is nothing new. In 1959 the CNR had to deal with technological change as it related to the railroad and the matter was settled. To the average person, who thinks only about his home, his job, his wife and family, and supporting his kids through university, four years is a long time. That type of person needs security, but no one in this country has that type of security any more. It seems that every dispute we hear of nowadays revolves around pensions, the indexing of pensions and technological change.

What are you as the minister of the department doing to prevent these types of disputes? I would suggest that you should be looking ahead in order to prevent these situations arising. To my mind, if workers have to go for four years with no contract, there is something wrong. What was the main obstacle which prevented the parties from coming to an agreement?

**Mr. Cadieux:** In order to have had that type of foresight in this particular dispute I would have had to have been the Minister of Labour in 1984. Unfortunately, that was not the case.

This dispute has been a long and difficult one. The parties have used all levels of the process afforded by the Canada Labour Code, and also chose in certain circumstances to go to the CLRB and to the Federal Court of Appeal in order to have certain points clarified. As you know, senator, certain legal proceedings, unfortunately, are sometimes more lengthy than one would want them to be. That is one of the main explanations why this has taken so long.

[Senator Argue.]

**Senator Turner:** You do not need to have a B.A. to figure out that sooner or later a man will have to retire. The main issues today—and Mr. Bob White has said this many times—are pensions, the indexing of pensions and technological change. What is the Department of Labour doing to ensure that we come up with a dispute-settlement arrangement to eliminate these strikes which this country can no longer afford? No matter what the job entails, strikes are outdated. We must come up with something else. The boys are asking for some security, but there is no security today. That issue is raised again and again.

**Mr. Cadieux:** I would also like to point out, senator, that the recourses before the CLRB and the Federal Court of Appeal were instituted by the union.

With respect to the present collective bargaining process, with all due respect, and notwithstanding the unfortunate major or bigger issues which become obviously more public because of the media, in particular, last year 11,000 collective agreements were reached and signed in Canada and more than 90 per cent of those were reached and signed without one single day lost due to strike or lock-out. Over all, and notwithstanding unfortunate cases like this one, our system works pretty well.

**Senator Turner:** The average worker in Canada does not trust the unions and he does not trust management, and that is where the government should move in and set up a platform. If you give them the basics they will take it from there, but you are not doing that.

**Mr. Cadieux:** I thank the honourable senator for his advice. I am personally of the opinion right now that the system works pretty well. As a matter of fact, each time I intervene some members of the opposing parties, of course not in this place but in the other place, say that I should not intervene and let the process work.

**Senator Turner:** For years there were 132,000 employees in the CNR. With the introduction of diesel locomotives that number dropped to 80,000, and now Mr. Lawson is talking about 41,000. This is all as a result of technological change. More employees are going to find themselves on the street. They are asking for job security, and I believe that it is the government's job to ensure that they have that security. Today management will not hire a man aged 40 or 45 or a woman aged 30 or 35. If they are hired they will end up in minimum-paying jobs. In my opinion, that is not democracy.

**Senator MacEachen:** Free trade will fix that!

**Senator Doody:** I was going to say that.

**The Chairman:** Honourable senators, the Senate is in Committee of the Whole on Bill C-106, an act to provide for the resumption of grain handling operations at the Port of Prince Rupert, British Columbia.

Shall the title be postponed?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**The Chairman:** Shall clause 1, the short title, stand?