

*Feed Grain*

ture. I think this is important because when we, unwittingly perhaps, sometimes blame labour for all the problems that crop up, we do little to serve good collective bargaining processes in Canada and I think we must be careful.

Here we are dealing with separate locals which for one reason or another have chosen to exercise their political muscle in the way that to them at the time seems most appropriate. I am not suggesting that the methods being chosen, of blocking access to feed grains, is proper; but in their minds it is proper, and if we are to overcome the difficulties of strikes, legal and otherwise, we must bear in mind that these individuals are acting in the most effective way they know.

● (2340)

The Postmaster General dealt with a number of areas which I wish to touch upon tonight. One has to do with the rate at which existing labour laws permit us to correct situations which exist, such as the one causing great concern in Quebec. The instruments and the procedures which are available—and I think this is apparent to everyone here this evening—are simply not adequate. They are not capable of meeting a worsening and deteriorating situation.

If the situation in Quebec city, Montreal and Trois-Rivières has brought anything to our attention, it has to be the fact that injunctions are not quick enough, and tribunals to decide through arbitration whether certain things may be done are not swift enough. These are things we in this chamber have a responsibility to correct. Hopefully we can go a long way by means of example in the present review of the Public Service Staff Relations Act and related acts. Hopefully we will be able to find some solutions, because that is our responsibility.

It is not necessarily our responsibility to intervene in legitimate disputes within the existing framework, but it is our responsibility, where we see weaknesses, to correct them. One of these weaknesses is the rate at which governments and users of services are able to obtain corrective action where illegal activity takes place. It is our responsibility to support that type of action.

I am somewhat regretful that there has not been tonight from the Treasury benches, particularly from the Minister of Labour (Mr. Munro), some acknowledgement of this. I am not here from Nova Scotia to make a speech on labour, but I am here to demonstrate my support for the necessity to improve some of our labour procedures which will remove or eliminate the causes which bring us here tonight. That is a problem which faces us all.

The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouellet) this evening was looking for suggestions on how we might improve this situation. This is an area we must consider. We must also consider carefully the definition of when an interest is so critically affected that this chamber must intervene with legislation. It is regrettable when that has to happen, and we know that it does from time to time. Again it is incumbent upon us to find ways to obviate or eliminate that necessity.

I will make a suggestion which the minister, or whoever reads these speeches tomorrow, might consider. Quite possibly we should take, for example, the pay research

[Mr. Forrestall.]

bureau away from the Treasury Board and from the staff relations board and imbue it with its own authority, establish it in an independent atmosphere, perhaps attach it to one of the universities in Canada which has demonstrated concern for government matters, and imbue it, as I said, with its own authority to do two separate things, among others.

First it should have the authority to do those cultural things which are necessary, the identification of proper pay and other benefit statistics, bring that information together, analyse it, and then disseminate it in areas where it can best be used. Money should be provided to do that, because this would be costly. Second, the government should give serious consideration to imbuing the Treasury Board with the responsibility of identifying that type of information which will describe for all of us the definition of essential services, that critical point in our day to day lives when interruption of those services requires the action of this chamber. It is the second suggestion to which I think the government should give the most consideration so that we can find some way out of the dilemma which continues to face us. It seems more and more so as time goes by.

We could have heard something of a more positive nature tonight. Compensation for losses has already been mentioned, but we have not heard very much about it tonight. This is an illegal matter. I suppose there is redress in the courts for third party damage, but it is extraordinarily expensive for a farmer to go to court and fight his way to the Supreme Court of Canada to recover losses incurred as a result of an illegal activity. I would not want to be the lower court trying to interpret just what is legal or illegal. Perhaps this is an area for very serious thought on the part of the government and this chamber, to seek out some method of compensation for innocent victims of actions arising from illegal activity, or activity which on the surface seems to be illegal.

These are suggestions, albeit not necessarily appropriate to the particular situation tonight, because there is nothing which can be done about it. But in order to remove the necessity of bringing these matters before the House in order to establish new methods of dispute resolution—keep in mind that the adversary system is probably the only one we have with respect to negotiation—we must move away from the mandatory results of the adversary system. That system brings about attitudes like, “I will not do this”, and “you will not move me”, and “get your policemen to move me”, or “drive your truck over”, or “I am here to protect my rights” when in fact those “rights” are duly protected by law, and an illegal interpretation is being exercised, or an illegal action is being carried on.

A question which keeps members of parliament here until midnight must indeed be serious. There is an hon. member here from Nova Scotia, another from British Columbia, some from parts of Ontario, a couple of hon. members from British Columbia, from Alberta, and many from the prairies because they sense a concern on the part of all hon. members from Quebec.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Forrestall:** We are here because we feel a need for an immediate end to this particular problem. We are here