

Government Organization

accurate I suggest he argue that matter with the former Minister of Labour and those officials of the department who prepared the report. I am prepared to accept the word of the former Minister of Labour that he has given an honest summary of the Freedman report. If the Postmaster General does not want to take it as being an honest summary, that is his business.

Mr. Kierans: On the point of order, Mr. Chairman, I do accept it as being an honest summary. I am simply raising the point that while I have read the Freedman report, I am not sure the hon. member has.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Orlikow: We now hear those trained seals banging their desks over there. At the rate we are going, we obviously will not finish this discussion tonight. Since the minister has not had time to read the Freedman report and will not listen to the former Minister of Labour—obviously he has not listened to the present one either—I promise the Postmaster General that tomorrow afternoon I will give him the exact quotation from the official text of the Freedman report. I wonder if I can continue now without the interruptions of the jumping-jack Postmaster General.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): That was Pickersgill.

Mr. Orlikow: This is the new Pickersgill.

On page 2 of this summary, Mr. Justice Freedman states:

Since run-throughs are not all equal in their effects, the commission recommends that either party should have the right to refer to an arbitrator the question whether a proposed run-through would or would not have the effect of causing a material change in working conditions.

For weeks the postal workers unions have been asking for precisely this, but what has the minister and his experts in the department—those great labour negotiators who have led us into three work stoppages in a couple of years—done to alleviate the situation? All they have said has been that we cannot have outside arbitration. They have suggested to the postal employees that they file not one grievance but 20 grievances or 50 grievances. The employees are going to be required to hire some high priced lawyers and this will drain the union treasury. I am sure that would suit the Postmaster General because obviously the unions would then not be able to continue the battle for what they

[Mr. Orlikow.]

consider to be justice. The Postmaster General does not believe in this because his great Pooh-bahs have decided they have treated the employees fairly.

• (9:20 p.m.)

The official summary, at page 3 reads:

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.

The former minister of labour, the Hon. Jack Nicholson, used to argue, he thought pretty persuasively, that he did not need to implement Mr. Justice Freedman's recommendation. He felt we did not need legislation because, after all, all good employees should be willing to do this voluntarily. You can see how wrong he was. We are not even talking about private employers; here is the government of Canada, here is the Postmaster General ignoring the basic concept of the Freedman report.

The Chairman: Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired.

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

Mr. Orlikow: Could I ask a question, Mr. Chairman? In calculating my time, did you take account of the rude interruptions of the minister?

The Chairman: Order, please. Is it the wish of the committee that the hon. member continue? There has to be unanimous consent for the hon. member to continue.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Perrault: He doesn't deserve it.

Mr. Orlikow: We get the same comment, Mr. Chairman, from the hon. member. Like the Prime Minister, I cannot remember his constituency. Page 3 of the summary of Mr. Justice Freedman's report reads:

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.