

Supply—Labour

code is fully implemented it will have long-awaited desirable effects. I understand that Part I of the code is subject to much easier scrutiny by the department when requests for deferment are made. Only time and experience will tell whether this implies that there have been a lot of requests for deferment or that Part I of the code is not strong enough. If there is misunderstanding of the work loads that are necessary in certain sectors of our private economy, then perhaps the minister may introduce amendments to the code.

I shall conclude by again expressing the hope that the meeting at five o'clock this afternoon will result in an announcement that the serious situation at the river ports has been overcome and that the dockers will be back at work soon.

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Chairman, we are in one of the most difficult years in terms of labour-management relations that we have experienced since the end of world war II. The minister has mentioned that the longshoremen in Quebec are on strike. Other strikes are likely to take place affecting our air lines, railways and flour mills, to mention just a few of the industries which come within federal jurisdiction. Tough negotiations are also in progress which may well lead to strikes in the steel, packing house and lumber industries, to mention just a few of the important, large groups of working people who are covered by provincial labour jurisdiction.

● (3:30 p.m.)

It is not surprising, Mr. Chairman, that this situation exists at the present time. It is not surprising that workers who have organized in unions have been rejecting tentative agreements which have been worked out by their union officers. Probably the best agreements ever negotiated by these officers are being rejected by the workers because they know what is happening to the cost of living. According to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, last year the cost of living rose by just over 4 per cent. That does not appear to be very much, but I am sure the ordinary housewife will not believe such figures are correct because when she goes to do her shopping, whether it be in my city of Winnipeg, the city of Ottawa or the city of Vancouver, she is likely to find a different situation. I should like to illustrate it by quoting from a letter I received a week or so ago from a woman in Calgary. I am sure the illustrations she gives are no different from

what they would be in any other city in Canada. She points out that in February, 1965 bacon was 59 cents a pound and a year later it was \$1.19. Strawberries in February, 1965 were three packages for a dollar and in February, 1966 were 53 cents a package. In February, 1965 soap was \$1.29 per box and in February, 1966 it was \$1.85. In February, 1965, grade A large eggs were two dozen for 69 cents and in February, 1966 they were 61 cents a dozen.

Is it any wonder that the workers become restless and want large increases in pay? I am sure that the working people of Winnipeg whom I represent would not mind so much if they could believe the increases were due to an increase being received by the producers, because in that event at least somebody who is working would be receiving the benefit. The fact is, Mr. Chairman, that the bulk of the increase is going not to the producers but to the middleman, the distributor.

Working people are not concerned just with the cost of living. They can read papers like the *Financial Post* just the same as businessmen and members of parliament. I have a page from the May 14, 1966 issue of the *Financial Post* which shows the profit picture for 354 Canadian companies. I am not going to read the figures in respect of the 354 but I should like to refer to a few examples among well known companies. This may indicate the reason workers in Canadian industry who are asking for increases in pay are willing to go on strike in order to obtain these increases. Let me give a few examples. In 1964 the net profit of Imperial Oil was \$79 million and in 1965 it rose to \$86 million. In 1964 the net profit of International Nickel was \$135 million and in 1965 it was \$143 million. Canadian Westinghouse in 1964 had a net profit of \$3,489,000 and in 1965 it was \$4,238,000. Simpsons Limited, a very good illustration, in 1964 had a profit of \$7 million and in 1965 it was \$8,600,000.

If I were to take the profits of the food chains I am sure they would show even more dramatic increases. This is the reason the workers are demanding pay increases and the reason they are determined to get them regardless of the difficulty and the fact that it may mean a strike. This is the reason the Minister of Labour is probably going to have the busiest year any minister of labour has had in the last 20 years. It is not enough to wait until a strike is called. The government must take very strong and very definite action. I am not going to go into the details