

Railway Operations Act

chesne's is quite clear. I based my decision mainly on that citation.

Mr. Peters: Mr. Chairman, we have before us an amendment to clause 5. Regardless of whether I agree with the decision that was made, I wish to make an additional proposition. On behalf of parliament I wish to add a cost of living bonus for those who are covered by this and other clauses of the legislation. I do not feel it is in competition with what has been done in the amendment which the committee just approved.

As I said this afternoon, if parliament makes a decision on behalf of two conflicting parties to implement legislation forcing the workers and the companies to resume their operations, we should at least ensure that those who are affected are not worse off at the end of the legislative process than at the beginning. I sincerely believe that justice will be done for the workers in the three categories which are affected by this clause, the non-operating members of the railway fraternity. I therefore, move that the following be added at page 4, line 7:

—and by increasing each basic rate of wages by a percentage increase, equal to the cost-of-living increase, as determined by Statistics Canada, effective on the dates such cost-of-living figures are released by Statistics Canada subsequent to January 1, 1973 and continue for the life of this legislation.

This means that if the cost of living remains static, the workers forced back to work will be no worse off than they are at present. However, if it increases, the cost of living increase determined by Statistics Canada will be applied. As the Minister of Transport said, this technique has been used in collective agreements by various organizations, not to get a wage increase, but to retain the standard of living. This was done in the late 50's or early 60's in a contract in which I was involved.

Adding this subclause fulfils the responsibility of parliament to ensure that those legislated back to work will be assured of retaining the same standard of living. This should be supported by all members in order to retain for these people the standard of living which they were able to convince the chairman of the conciliation board was fair and just. This and other groups will be able to do that throughout the life of this legislation.

The Deputy Chairman: I hope the committee will not prevent the Chairman from accepting the amendment without procedural debate. At this point, the Chair finds it acceptable. Is the committee ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

● (0010)

Amendment (Mr. Peters) negatived: Yeas, 29; nays, 172.

The Deputy Chairman: I declare the motion to amend clause 5 defeated. Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Orlikow: Clause 5 deals entirely with wages. The government has studiously avoided another subject which is of equal concern to the railway workers. I refer to job security. As I listened to the Minister of Transport making his eloquent speech this morning, I came to the conclusion

[The Deputy Chairman.]

that the more difficult his position becomes, the more eloquent he becomes as compared with the years when he led workers as a labour leader, and the more his views change. As I listened to him I could not but realize that there was not a word of consideration on his part for the difficulties which the railway workers experience. What we heard was a 100 per cent defence of the status quo in the railway industry as it has been and as it will continue if the government has its way.

In less than 20 years the labour force in the railway industry in Canada has been reduced by more than one third. No other industry has experienced a reduction of this size. Railway workers are worried about their lack of job security and by the fact that the tremendous increase in the productivity of the railway industry has gone entirely to the profit of the company.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member is talking now about job security and he makes some valid points, but he is speaking on the subject with reference to clause 5 which deals with the wage question. I suppose he may be doing so because the NDP has prepared an amendment with respect to the Weldon report tied in with the wage consideration. However, I suggest we have a proposal which would accomplish the same purpose with respect to job security. It pertains to clause 16(3), which is on page 12. There we are talking about special references to the arbitrator concerning job security. This is a general application clause which applies to all three groups. I suggest the hon. member would find his comments more pertinent to that clause.

Mr. Orlikow: Could I ask the minister whether the government intends to move an amendment which would spell out job security provisions for railway workers?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): I have a proposed amendment involving a direction to the arbitrator which I think the hon. member will find acceptable.

Mr. Orlikow: If the minister has an amendment I am content to wait, but I tell him right now I shall not be satisfied to leave the question of job security as one of the unsolved problems to be dealt with unilaterally by an arbitrator.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Before the hon. member prejudices the question, I suggest he look at the amendment. He may find that the special direction to the arbitrator which would be contained in the statute gives him a sense of security.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. Earlier in the day the President of the Privy Council requested that those of us who were planning to submit amendments should produce copies of those amendments in advance. We readily complied. Even my friends to the right complied in due course. I suggest that if the government has further amendments to move, they should in all courtesy let us have copies of them now.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): That is quite agreeable. I will send them over now. I should like the hon. member to appreciate that some of the amendments took into consid-