

Feed Grain

back to their jobs. Aside from being cumbersome and costly, this procedure is also quite often a case of too little, too late. By the time we go through the motions of assembling parliament and approving back to work legislation, considerable and unnecessary damage could be, and usually is, caused by the strike. It would be much better to place specific and implicit authority in the hands of the government to deal with emergency situations threatened by actual or apprehended strikes.

If the suggestion in the proposed bill is accepted, the government will have the authority, and will have the responsibility, to provide such service in any future situations of that kind. The government will be able to stop a strike that shows promise of jeopardizing the health and safety of the people of our country, and prohibit a strike from occurring. It will be able to order negotiations to proceed in the event of a breakdown in contract negotiations, and it will be able to impose binding arbitration on management as well as labour. There is, of course, a provision for setting aside any decision of the industrial inquiry commission on the execution of a collective agreement by the parties to a labour dispute affected by this legislation.

It can be seen that every effort has been made to respect and preserve both the letter and the spirit of collective bargaining. My idea encourages rather than discourages collective bargaining, and in the final analysis it is intended solely to eliminate irresponsible actions and conduct from labour-management relations. I would not say that it is the whole answer, or that sweetness and light and total harmony will result immediately upon the approval of such a bill. But it would be a start.

Any conscientious citizen of this country must realize that now is the time to start before our country deteriorates any further due to labour unrest. We must begin setting down concrete measures rather than ad hoc pieces of legislation. We must begin to lay the groundwork, whether it be by adopting single sector bargaining or even considering the possibility of abolishing the right to strike in essential services. This groundwork must be laid not only for the present and existing problems but, more important, for the future.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Charles Lapointe (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, I would like first of all to thank the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) for bringing this important matter to the attention of this House this evening, and giving us an opportunity to participate in this debate which is most important to every member concerned and to every member of this House.

Although he deserves commendation for that action and for a most constructive speech, perhaps the only intelligent one from the other side this evening, this may not be the best forum for the solution of an increasingly urgent problem. Because this room is too often turned into a temple of the spoken word. And that is all we heard this evening, words. All the speakers we heard from the other side tried to accuse us, they sought one by one ministers, first or second benchers, asking where they were, whether they were banqueting or sleeping, in an attempt to have the Canadian people believe government ministers are not interested in the problems which are now of concern to

[Mr. Jelinek.]

Quebecers. It is not by spending evenings here listening to such nonsense as we have been getting from the other side that we will solve the movement of grains in Quebec.

Up until now, no reference has been made to the facts. What is really going on in Quebec presently? It has been said that grains do not move because of the longshoremen's strike. What are the facts, exactly? There are now 1,200 longshoremen in dispute with the Maritime Employers Association in the ports of Quebec City, Montreal and Trois-Rivières. The conciliation board chaired by Mr. Justice Gold submitted after the conclusion of the collective agreement on December 30, 1973, various measures aimed at solving the dispute. Among other measures, Mr. Justice Gold recommended a 57 percent salary increase over a two-year period. Present longshoremen wages in Quebec City, Montreal and Trois-Rivières average \$5.10 an hour. In his conciliation report, Mr. Justice Gold also recommended a 1,600-hour per year guarantee for Montreal longshoremen 1,400 for those in Quebec city and 1,200 in Trois-Rivières. The members of the International Longshoremen Association did not accept that report. They in turn ask for a 52 40-hour-week guarantee, that is 2,080 hours a year for an average of \$20,000 yearly wages.

They also object, perhaps rightly, to the around-the-clock availability clause, believing that such a clause could be prejudicial to them in their dealings with their employer. Since the positions seemed to be increasingly hardening as much on one side as on the other, as a result of that deadlock, the government appointed an arbitrator, Mr. Charles Poirier, but unfortunately, for the past few days, Mr. Poirier has remained constantly available to meet the two parties involved, but nobody up to now during the past few hours or days has resorted to his services. Now, even if those negotiations have not broken down, they have at least reached a standstill and this is why it is becoming more and more urgent that the movement of feed grain be restored in Quebec.

The closing of the ports in Montreal, Quebec City and Trois-Rivières prevents that movement of feed grain and, consequently, gives rise to very serious problems for farm producers and secondly for Quebec consumers.

The current situation prevailing in Quebec ports was described tonight by several of my colleagues but the fact is that the details given by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouellet) as well as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Corriveau) shed a little more light on the situation as it now stands. We know, as we were told, that an injunction was granted which will quite probably be extended for a further period of 10 days for the port of Quebec City. At present, the port is open and trucks can run. Unfortunately, as was also mentioned, most of the grain supplies now available in Quebec City are made out of corn, and feed grain must be obtained from other ports. In Trois-Rivières, unfortunately, access to elevators is entirely impossible at present and quite the same occurs in Montreal with the exception of four trucks which managed this morning to reach the elevators, load and leave before 7 o'clock in the morning, when picket lines were set up. With the exception of four trucks this morning, the situation is the same as in Trois-Rivières. The Quebec Federated Cooperative asked today for an injunction for Montreal, and if granted,