

seemed no other hope of speedy settlement. Parliament nearly had to intervene to prevent a threatened work stoppage by the workers on the St. Lawrence Seaway, and you will recall that we were within minutes of inviting Parliamentary action when the work stoppage in B.C. ports, which threatened the economy of Western Canada, was brought to an end through mediation.

The St. Lawrence dock-workers dispute involved a long work stoppage - a very long one. It lasted 38 days. It was very costly. It endangered our tightly scheduled wheat shipments. It affected many vital industries that ship or receive through St. Lawrence ports, including the steel, the automotive, the forest, the chemical and the asbestos industries. It affected Expo '67. It affected international trade and international relations....

#### SEAWAY DISPUTE

The Government became involved in the Seaway matter for the same reason that it became involved in the dispute of the longshoremen. It was absolutely essential to keep the St. Lawrence Seaway operating especially after the crippling strike in the three Quebec ports, which had gone on for five weeks and had just been settled.

The Seaway was, in a very real sense, a Canadian life-line, and, under the circumstances, and having regard to the very special conditions prevailing in the Seaway at that time, I believe the course of action followed by the Government was not unreasonable. We should have been severely criticized had we allowed another disastrous strike to occur, even if it only lasted for a few days....

#### RAILWAY DISPUTE

...There was the stoppage of rail service in August last, largely because of a dispute involving the non-operating railway employees.... It was precipitated by very substantial wage demands, and by the concern of the unions with their job security in the face of inevitable technological changes, but it brought into question the whole basis of operation of Canadian railways. It also threw a harsh light on some inadequacies in our industrial relations legislation....

Recently, my Department has analyzed the results of recent collective bargaining for 34 large groups of employees in Canada outside the construction industry, which is seasonal in most parts of Canada.

There is, I assure you, absolutely no pattern of uniformity, based on 30 per cent or anywhere near that figure.

#### RANGE OF GAINS

Wage gains ranged from one settlement of 4 per cent over a period of less than 15 months to 70 per cent over a period of about 30 months, and I can assure you the Government played no part whatever in that settlement. It was genuine, straightforward, free collective bargaining. In between these extremes, almost every possible percentage wage increase can be found.

Among these are increases of 35 per cent over three years for transport drivers in Ontario, 50 per cent over a three-year contract in Quebec logging, and 70 per cent over a three-year contract on wood-cutting operations of the Anglo-Canadian Paper Company. All of these settlements by private industry preceded by several weeks the settlement with the dock workers.

Now, in my opinion, there is obviously something wrong when rail disputes, and disputes in other national transportation and communication industries, regularly come before Government, and at times Parliament, with major issues still undecided after several months of bargaining and conciliation board hearings.

This kind of thing certainly represents a breakdown in our system of collective bargaining, the system that has for several decades been the cornerstone of industrial relations in Canada. It is difficult to lay the blame for the present regrettable situation in any one place, but I incline to the view that the main culprit is just technological and other desirable - in fact, other necessary - changes, which pose problems that our existing industrial relations procedures are not equipped to solve.

#### INDUSTRIAL TASK FORCE

One thing seems clear - that the time has come for a re-examination of industrial relations and the mechanism for dealing with industrial disputes in this country. This is the job of the task force announced by the Prime Minister at the beginning of September, composed of Canadian industrial-relations experts, outside and inside the Government....

The task force will, of course, consider the Freedman Report, among other reports and analyses. I hope that it will come up with new ideas about labour relations that will guide us towards new methods of consultation and collective bargaining tailored to today's conditions.

#### GREATER PRODUCTIVITY NEEDED

Certainly, new ideas are required, if we are to solve the problems of labour-management relations in this age of rapid technological change. That more and more technological changes are inevitable, and necessary, no one can doubt. We must continue to increase our national productivity to meet world-wide competition and to maintain a stable economy. Remarkable increases in wages, shortened hours of work, and other fringe benefits have been possible in the past 20 years in Canada, only because of increased productivity.

We must increase our knowledge and our skills. We must use the most modern techniques of management, and we must seize on every new technological advance that we can use to advantage. Governments can assist, unions can co-operate, but, in the final analysis, it is management's responsibility to provide the best tools, the best training, the best working conditions and the best methods....

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