

Railway Operations Act

an added three-quarters of 1 per cent. This is the great Tory generosity to the non-operating employees. Three-quarters of 1 per cent for the whole of 1974 is offered. But I am not surprised. The people to my right months ago wanted to impose a freeze, so that the operating and non-operating employees, if it had come into force, would not have been able to receive any increase. So I suppose I should be grateful to them for agreeing to any increase.

● (2340)

I say as seriously as I can that this kind of situation in this parliament is sad. It is sad for parliament and sad for Canada that some 50,000 men and women—and there are women in the non-ops union—who have been out on strike for weeks without a single cent of strike pay or strike benefit are to be forced back to work by a law which does not provide for a settlement that is acceptable to them, or that is fair, just and reasonable. It is even sadder that this parliament should engage in an exercise which will take from the shop crafts union and the running trades employees the right even to begin a strike, and force on them a proposition that they are not prepared to accept.

Well, if that satisfies the government and if that almost satisfies the Conservatives, that is not news to us. We know, and we have always known, where the parties that spend their efforts helping to assist the development of the strong and privileged in this country stand. We have always known where they stood, and now they have proven it.

As I said, we shall vote for the Tory amendment, inadequate though it may be. I also want to say that when this measure reaches third reading, we will again oppose it as unjust to Canadians in their work.

The Deputy Chairman: Is the committee ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

Amendment (Mr. McGrath) agreed to: Yeas, 111; nays, 100.

The Deputy Chairman: I declare the motion carried. Shall the clause as amended carry?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette (Charlevoix): Mr. Chairman, further to the remarks of my two colleagues, the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) and the hon. member for Champlain (Mr. Matte), I must say we feel that it is quite improper for us to bargain as we did tonight. We should solve the problem efficiently and not, as the hon. member for Champlain explained, play around with figures; we can solve it only by basing our decisions on the cost of living index. Then, and only then will we solve the problem adequately for all, the railroaders concerned. I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Champlain (Mr. Matte):

That subclause (1) of clause 5 of Bill C-217 be amended as follows:

By deleting in lines 6 and 7 on page 3 of subclause (1) the words "thirty cents per hour", in lines 1 and two on page 4 of subclause (1) the words "by five per cent" and in line 6, on page 4 in subclause (1) the words "by three per cent" and substituting therefor the following: "by an amount based on a percentage equal

[Mr. Lewis.]

to the increase in the cost of living index calculated on the average salary of all the railway employees."

Adopting that amendment would spare us what we have witnessed this evening, that is bargaining from 30 cents to 34 and then 38 cents, according to the arguments of the Progressive Conservatives who suggest that salary increases be based on the cost of living index, which has gone up by 4 cents since the last recommendations of Mr. Justice Munroe, or according to the NDP which maintains that 38 cents would equal 10.8 per cent in relation to the cost of living index. Why fool around with figures, percentages, when it would be so simple and salutary for the workers to solve the matter by simply indicating, as we are now proposing, that the increase be based on the cost of living index. We would not be grappling in a year or two with a recurrence of the problems confronting us today, but that would be the ideal solution.

So once again we have presented our motion, and we hope that the House will understand its merits.

● (2350)

[*English*]

The Deputy Chairman: Order please. I wish to inform hon. members that the motion that is proposed by the hon. member for Charlevoix does not seem to meet the rules and regulations and practices of this House. I want to make my comments directly to hon. members and refer them to citations on the acceptability of the amendment that is before us.

[*Translation*]

I must point out to the hon. member for Charlevoix that the proposal he is making now relates to a decision just made by the committee and if the hon. member wishes to be referred to various citations of Beauchesne's, particularly citations 146, 194 and 202, he will realize that the Chair cannot accept a proposal with respect to which a decision has already been made. The Chair is quite willing to understand the intention of the hon. member, but nevertheless he would have had to propose his amendment before a decision had been arrived at concerning the amendment agreed to a short while ago. Citation 146(1) of Beauchesne's provides that, and I quote:

No member shall—

Mr. Fortin: That is definitely not that one, but another one.

The Deputy Chairman: It is rather citation 148, which reads as follows:

148. (1) It is a wholesome restraint upon members that they cannot revive a debate already concluded; and it would be little use in preventing the same question from being offered twice in the same session if, without being offered, its merits might be discussed again and again.

Also, I would invite the hon. members to examine, on page 164, Subsection (1) of Citation No. 194, and I quote:

194. (1) A motion or amendment cannot be brought forward which is the same in substance as a question which has already been decided—

I understand that the hon. member proposes a new alternative to the committee, but he is dealing in fact with a matter which has already been decided by the committee.