

Canada Labour Code

of this kind, when these are the very people we are trying to help.

● (1742)

I do not want to be specific at this time, but the minister may see, from the provisions contained in the amendments to the Canada Labour Code, that at the present time, as far as averaging orders are concerned, there is no reference to employees, no reference to consultation with employees but, rather, the only provision in this respect relates to an application by the employer. If the minister took the grain industry by way of example, he would find the elevator agents would, in fact, be very receptive and agreeable to such an application being made for an averaging order relating to hours of work which they are entitled to perform during heavy seasons. It would be part of an attempt by the government to consult with labour in order to allow them to be involved in the process. Perhaps provision could be made in the legislation to manifest the desire of the minister—I know we on this side have such a desire—to bring employees into the consultative process as opposed simply to being the odd man out and a third party in the whole procedure.

The point I have with respect to the grain industry, whether it relates to elevator agents, managers of elevators or just people involved generally in the grain industry, is twofold. First of all, consideration should be given to this particular segment of employees to ensure that they are able to work during heavy seasons. The period of time should be sufficiently long so that plans can be made. Then everyone involved in the industry will know that hours of work will be adjusted to a particular period of time during a certain designated season. Then there will be no misunderstanding about applications having to be made a few weeks before harvest, for example. On a yearly basis, everyone will know in advance, as far as seeding time and harvest time are concerned, that there will be a period of time when the elevators will be open and available.

I suggest this should extend, as well, to implement dealers and manufacturers. One of the problems we have in western Canada is the difficulty during a heavy season—the harvest season, for example—in getting the parts needed for repair purposes to keep the machinery operating. It seems to me the extent of this application is a matter, again, for the committee. Such a provision respecting the grain industry could well be extended to manufacturers of farm implements. They then have flexibility as far as supplying spare parts was concerned. It could also include truckers and others in the transportation industry which is related to the farm industry. It would allow them to work extra hours and to be sure parts were available at the place of the farming operation. In the long run, we could have a more efficient farming industry, which is so important to our economy.

I realize some of these matters are under provincial jurisdiction. However, I say to the hon. member—who is a very astute member and dresses very nattily—that the particular references I have made are to matters under federal jurisdiction; that is, interprovincial transportation and interprovincial busi-

[Mr. Hnatyshyn.]

nesses. I know the hon. member is rarely wrong, but I must say to him, rarely is he right.

I would ask the minister to take these suggestions into consideration during the committee hearing which we will have, and to make sure that the farming industry, the grains industry in western Canada will not be put in the same position that has all too often occurred through this government's policies, and our suggestions being given scant consideration. I assure the minister that if he attends the committee meetings and this government is not receptive to the representations which I and my colleagues from western Canada will make, we will be heard and we will not stand for any scant attention being given to the interests of western Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I simply say there are many precedents—the minister will know this with respect to the concept of averaging—and many provincial legislatures have passed legislation because of the importance of particular industries within their jurisdictions. This is an important matter as far as western Canada is concerned. We are in support of the basic precepts set forth in this bill, but we want to make sure the application is fair to everyone across the country, especially western Canada. I know the minister will give consideration to the matters that have been raised. We look forward to his receiving our suggestions in the committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): It is my duty to inform all members that if the minister speaks now, he will close the debate.

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fair comments that have been made by many speakers in the official opposition, the NDP and the Social Credit party. I shall not endeavour to answer many of the points raised, because some speakers said they will raise them again in committee. I shall give further thought to the points raised as to how we intend to achieve the objectives of certain clauses of the bill, what the process will be, how we can speed up the system, how people will be appointed and the number on committees, the interests of people in the grain industry and how they can be protected with respect to averaging. All these things, it seems to me, we can deal with constructively in committee.

The encouraging aspect of the remarks of most of the spokesmen for the opposition parties is that they agree with the fundamental precepts of the bill. That being so, they are more concerned with working out acceptable arrangements in arriving at some of the objectives of the legislation, and in that