

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Saturday, March 3, 1990.

TIME — 10 a.m.

LOCATION — Winnipeg, Manitoba

CHAIRMAN — Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli)

ATTENDANCE - 11 — QUORUM - 6

Members of the Committee present:

Hon. Messrs. Downey, Enns, Hon. Mrs. Hammond

Messrs. Edwards, Helwer, Maloway, Patterson, Plohman, Praznik, Rose, Storie

*Substituting for Ms. Avis Gray, Mr. Allan Patterson.

WITNESSES:

Ms. Gail Sourisseau, Private Citizen

Mr. Kenneth EMBERLEY, Private Citizen

Ms. Linda Fletcher, Private Citizen

Ms. Kathy Kraychuk, Private Citizen

APPEARING:

Mr. Mark Minken, MLA for Seven Oaks

MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION:

Bill No. 31—The Labour Relations Amendment Act

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Mr. Chairman: I call the Standing Committee on Industrial Relations to order. Yes, Mr. Edwards.

COMMITTEE CHANGE

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): I would like to make a motion that the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) replace the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray).

Mr. Chairman: Is there leave for the Liberal Party to replace Patterson for Gray? Is the nomination accepted? Agreed.

Mr. Chairman: This morning the committee will resume hearing public presentations on Bill No. 31, The Labour Relations Amendment Act. If there are any members of the public—order, please. If there are any members of the public who wish to check to see if they are registered to speak to the committee, the list of presenters is posted outside the committee room. If members of the public would like to be added to the list to give a presentation to the committee, they can

contact the Clerk of Committees, and she will see that they will be added to the list.

If there are any out-of-town presenters or those who are unable to return for subsequent meetings, please identify yourselves to the Clerk, and she will see that the names are brought forward before the committee as soon as possible.— (interjection)— Are you from out of town, Mr. Downey?

Just prior to resuming public presentations, did the committee wish to indicate to members of the public how long the committee will be sitting this morning? —(interjection)— Order, please; order, please. Is it the will of the committee that we sit till 12:30? Agreed.

Our first presenter this morning is Gail Sourisseau, No. 43 on your list. Because she has to leave to go to work shortly, she would like to make her presentation. Gail Sourisseau, please come forward. Ms. Sourisseau, do you have a written presentation? —(interjection)— Fine. Please proceed.

An Honourable Member: What number is this?

Mr. Chairman: Number 43 on the list. Please proceed.

* (1005)

Ms. Gail Sourisseau (Private Citizen): I think FOS should remain—

Mr. Chairman: Excuse me, I wonder if you could turn your mikes down a little so that we could hear you. Thank you.

Ms. Sourisseau: I think FOS should remain. As a member of a union and my husband, we feel it is there for the little people, should we need it. I realize this is a very controversial law that people do not understand unless they have been there. By this I mean labour disputes and strikes.

I have been through two strikes, the first being my husband's in 1984 with Burn's Meats, which lasted five months; and mine in 1987 with Westfair Foods which lasted four months.

At the time of my husband's strike, I was only getting eight to nine hours a week at SuperValu, down from 25 to 30 when I started. I can still remember when he came home and said, we're on strike. Then he would sit down and say, it will be okay, it won't last long, maybe a week, maybe two. We can make it. Your emotions run wild. Then you sit and start thinking of so many things. Will I make the payments, pay the bills or arrange to catch up later, or we'll just put food on the table? It sounds drastic. Well, it was.

It is not a pleasant thing to go through, emotionally or financially. It even had its toll on my kids. They would

say, it's okay, Mom and Dad, we'll be okay. You stand up for what you believe is right and hope a fair settlement can be reached. You work hard all your life to achieve and make a comfortable standard of living for yourself and your family and you have to stand up for what is right and fair.

Had FOS been law, things may have been settled sooner and a lot of people would not have suffered so long. My second experience with a strike was mine, with Westfair. At that time I was working 21 hours a week, a guarantee I had from my last contract. We had become used to the extra income and made a few purchases, not thinking we would be on strike again. Well, it did, and there we were going through it all over again. We made it through again but a few of the wounds are still healing.

Again, if FOS had been there for us, maybe it would not have lasted so long. If FOS is to go it is just another one of the things that myself and others will have to worry about if we cannot come to a settlement with negotiations with the company, and how long will it last? FOS came into effect and it was a sign of relief and security knowing that we had something on our side to help us through labour negotiations, and things would get settled a lot sooner if it was there.

With all the changes that are going on with free trade and GST, you really wonder what is going to happen to us, the little people. It is also a frightening thought that job security is on the bottom of the list, and by taking away FOS, that is what it will do to us. By that I mean, if a strike goes on for a long time, other people are hired to take my job. I work too long and too hard for that to happen. It is just not fair. How can they do this to me?

FOS has been applied for 72 times since its legislation. Does that not tell you something? It should remain as law. This year 53,000 Manitobans are up for new contracts. It sure would help ease a lot of people's minds if it remains. It is kind of like a little money in the bank, security for the working people. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Sourisseau. Any questions? Mr. Storie.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Ms. Sourisseau, thank you very much for coming and we appreciate that for many people this is a new experience. However, we want to assure you that a legislative committee is simply an attempt on the part of the Legislature to listen, and you need not feel nervous about presenting your views at all. We are very glad that you are here.

A couple of questions. How long have you worked for Westfair Foods?

Ms. Sourisseau: Nine years.

* (1010)

Mr. Storie: You mentioned when you started your presentation that you initially had 25 hours, 30 hours.

Ms. Sourisseau: Thirty hours a week, yes.

Mr. Storie: How did you and your employer arrive at that number? Why were you originally—

Ms. Sourisseau: Well, I was one of the first employees in the new store.

Mr. Chairman: I wonder, Ms. Sourisseau, if you would wait until I recognize you before you answer the questions, please, just so that they get the mikes turned on. Okay, please proceed.

Ms. Sourisseau: Oh, I am sorry. Okay. I first started when the store first opened and there were not that many employees, I was just working evenings at the time and receiving that number of hours. I guess I received them for about a year and a half, two years. Then of course they started hiring more people and my hours went down to eight hours a week and remained that way for a couple of years until our new contract was up where our union got us guarantee of hours. With my position of seniority, I was guaranteed 21 hours. I now am working 24. My guarantee has gone up, my seniority has gone up.

Mr. Storie: At that time, the 25 or 30 hours would have been normal, or would you have been working more than most people?

Ms. Sourisseau: Pretty well normal for all the people in our store. It was more or less what they told me I would be getting when they hired me.

Mr. Storie: And you were subsequently reduced to 21 hours. That was what you achieved in your next collective agreement. Was Westfair at that time attempting to reduce people's hours even further?

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes, before the 21 hours that I did get, they had reduced me from 25 to 30 hours a week to 8 to 9. Then our next contract came up and the union got us a guarantee which brought me back to 21.

Mr. Storie: Right now, you mentioned that you have a 24-hour guarantee. How does that compare to many of the other people working at Westfair? What is the average number of hours put in?

Ms. Sourisseau: It is based on your percentage. A third of the group gets a guarantee, so if there are 100 cashiers, 33 get a guarantee, the first 10 on the list would get 24, the next 10 get 21, the next 18. After that, if you have been in employment for two years you are guaranteed 12, and after that nothing.

Mr. Storie: In other words, if you have worked for Westfair for less than two years you would be entitled to no pension benefits, you would not be contributing to the pension plan or have any other benefits.

Ms. Sourisseau: Not really, no. It is all based on your hours.

Mr. Storie: In your opinion, has the ongoing, I guess, debate between your bargaining unit and Westfair been around the question of hours and security?

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes, that was the main strike issue.

Mr. Storie: Could you share with the committee your view on why Westfair continues to reduce the number of hours allocated to staff? Why are they doing that?

Ms. Sourisseau: Well, I guess it benefits them. They do not have to pay benefits, they hire people at a lower wage. Rather than give me my 24 hours, give me eight at top rate and give the other people my other existing hours at a lower rate. More profit for them.

Mr. Storie: Ms. Sourisseau, you do not strike me as a militant unionist. I am wondering what emotions you went through when your bargaining unit was deciding along with others to go on strike.

Ms. Sourisseau: I previously did not work for a union. I worked at the Canadian Wheat Board for 12 years, and I quit to raise a family and stay home for a few years. I wanted something close to home, convenient, part time, so I applied at SuperValu and got on. It is such a different atmosphere. Westfair—I should not get into it—

Mr. Storie: Please do.

* (1015)

Ms. Sourisseau: The first day I walked in there for my shift, I remember coming home and saying to my husband, boy, this sure is not like my old job. I mean, I would have coffee with the president, we were so equal. It was like I had the uniform on, I have the suit. That is it. It was just the way they treat you is totally different. I mean it is just so regimental. Coffee breaks are monitored to the last minute. It is just you really have to fight for what you believe in and I have had this conversation with my employer that I respect her, I know my position and her position. There is no need to treat people like this. I guess I am just an average working person who has always worked to make a better life for my family and I aim to help out. It is just not fair that people could be treated like this. I consider myself a fair, hard working person, dependable, I do not take things for granted or—I do not know.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Chairperson, if I could read between the lines you are saying that there just did not seem to be the respect.

Ms. Sourisseau: No, exactly.

Mr. Storie: A question, why do you think that some Members of this Legislature feel that they have to defend the rights of people like Westfair to treat their workers like that? What is the logic behind that? Were you not a productive worker when you worked for an employer who was more responsive and more understanding and showed some respect?

Ms. Sourisseau: I do not understand. Are you talking when I worked at Westfair?

Mr. Storie: No, your other employer.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Storie, I want to warn you that you should try to keep your remarks to the brief that is presented by the presenter.

Mr. Storie: I certainly am—on a point of order—trying to keep my remarks and my questions to the point here. The point is that final offer selection we have said brings peace. It brings a reasonableness to negotiations. In some cases we have maintained that reasonableness is lacking. I think what we have heard from our witness this morning is that in the case of one of the most—

Floor Question: Witness?

Mr. Storie: Witness, yes, witness. This morning is that in some cases in fact one of the most violent and vicious strikes in our recent history that reasonableness was missing. I think if you listened to the presentation what Ms. Sourisseau said was that if final offer selection had been available all of that unreasonableness could have disappeared overnight because the company would have understood that they had to be reasonable. So my point was the question of reasonableness—

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Thank you. Mr. Rose.

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): Mr. Chairman, we saw yesterday—and we have allowed all the way through the ramblings of the NDP. Now I agree with that. I think we want to get all the information from the people that we can, but I think we should stay a little more germane to the subject.

Yesterday we witnessed a situation where they dominated the time; we have given the courtesy of speaking first. They dominated the time to the point where the person said he had 15 minutes to catch a plane. I came up when he had only 10 minutes to catch his plane and said I had a number of questions, they are all here, gave my position away, thanked him for coming and they asked another 15 minutes of questions, most unnecessary questions. That was not to the regular public but that was to Westfair Foods. I think that we were denied our right. It may have been wrong for the presenter to have allowed such a short time here but the fact of the matter is if we go on and on and on and ramble we have people sitting here who have to come back the next day and they may never be heard. So I think that we could stay a little closer to subject.

Having said that I certainly do not want in any way to inhibit the questions and the answers that come from the people particularly today, but I do want to complain particularly about yesterday that there was I think a lack of courtesy shown on the part of that Party especially when I had virtually dismissed the presenter.

* (1020)

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. It is not a point of order. I would like to caution everyone that the questions to the presenters are for clarification of their brief only and not statements. If you make any statements, I will cut you off.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Patterson, you had a question?

Mr. Allan Patterson (Radisson): No, just a brief statement along the same lines. I am not asking, I am telling Mr. Storie that final offer selection has nothing to do with the—

Mr. Chairman: We cannot debate points of order, Mr. Patterson. Thank you for your comments.

Mr. Storie, do you have a question for—

Mr. Storie: Mr. Chairperson, on a point of order.

Mr. Chairman: Okay.

Mr. Storie: The Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) is not going to tell me what final offer selection is about. We have a witness who said that—

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, that is not a point of order.

Mr. Storie: Well, Mr. Chairperson, my questions were on the final offer selection. I intend to keep them on final offer selection, with your indulgence.

Mr. Chairman: Let us continue with our questioning.- (interjection)- Mr. Patterson, order, please.

Mr. Storie, let us continue the questioning of the presenters.- (interjection)-

Order, please. We have a large number of presenters today. Let us try to get through them in the best possible order. Mr. Storie.

Mr. Storie: Well, Mr. Chairman, we understand some sensitivity. The Liberal Party has been battered for a week and a half now over their position on final offer selection.

Just a follow-up question to Ms. Sourisseau about the decision to strike. You had begun your remarks on that decision. You had referenced your family and how important that decision was to them. Was your family supportive in the end of your decision?

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes, very, even my children, and I want to mention too, even a lot of my friends who do not belong to my union but other unions. Some of them have been through terrible strikes, others have not. They were all very supportive of me coming on the picket line and so on, even my children. They did not understand the full thing. We did take them on the picket line a couple of times. They did not really care for it, so we did not bring them. We explained to them why we were there, and they were very supportive.

They realized they could not have things like they used to. We do not live far beyond our means but we chose a standard of living. My husband and I both work and we have worked hard. I have worked for 20 years and my husband for 25 years. We have always worked to maintain that standard of living.

For someone to take it away, it is just not fair. You just cannot say, okay, the company's doing poorly, let us take this away from the workers. When you have worked for so long and so hard, how can they come and take this amount of money or whatever it is away from you, when you have gone out and purchased that new car or whatever. We can make the payment. All of a sudden they want to take \$200 a month away.

You can just go on and on for all these reasons. It is a free country. It is not democratic to me that they can do this.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Chairperson, I think we respect the fact that it was a difficult decision. I gather though that you, in the final analysis, felt that you had no alternative.

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes, that is how I felt.

Mr. Storie: In your opinion, would it be more difficult for people who are supplementing family income, for single parents, to make the decision to go on strike?

* (1025)

Ms. Sourisseau: Most definitely, yes. There were single parents on our picket line who were not getting child support from their husband, and no income was coming in at all. I mean it was just very drastic for them. You know, we tried to support her and it was really hard.

Mr. Storie: When you mentioned that if final offer selection had been available, you felt that the strike certainly would not have been as long and perhaps there would not have been a strike. Why do you think that final offer selection would have had that effect?

Ms. Sourisseau: It is our choice, it is up to the workers whether we want to use final offer selection or not. I mean you stand out there, you walk around, you picket for so long for what you believe in, but it is nice knowing that hey, this is enough already, we are not getting anywhere, it is four months or five months, whatever it may be, I am broke, I am desperate. There is something there that you know you can lean on and say let us try to solve this now. Let us have a fair settlement and get back to work. I really feel it may have worked.

Mr. Storie: Just one final question. You mentioned the word fair. I am wondering whether there was discussion amongst the workers or amongst your unit about the danger or the potential for loss should a third party, a selector, be asked to choose between your position and management's position. Do you think that third person would be fair? Could you have lived for example with the selector choosing Westfair's position?

Ms. Sourisseau: That is a hard question. I can see both sides, but when you come right down to it, you want a settlement as quickly as possible. You want things to get back to normal so I guess what I am saying, there comes a time where you say hey, let us try it, this has gone on too long already. We cannot do this forever.

Mr. Storie: In the final analysis, final offer selection is a reasonable alternative even though you may not get what you want because both parties put their position on the table and what is deemed to be the fairest is chosen.

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes, I believe that.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minenko had his hand up first here.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): I appreciate many of the things that you are saying, having been a member of a union before, as well as a lawyer representing women who found themselves having to leave a family relationship with a husband and then trying to chase them down for maintenance and things like that. I can appreciate what goes through in that type of situation. It is very difficult.

What I would like to ask is, you mentioned about the confrontationist attitude at the company that you are working for now as compared to your previous employment. I presume that other people had mentioned the same kind of a thing, like if they were employed some place else that this was a really different kind of a thing. Is that a pretty common thing that you have heard from people who had worked at other places other than at SuperValu and then come to work at SuperValu and said there is quite a change?

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes, I think so. I really do. They just do not seem to respect you. You know I really feel that way and I really believe I am old enough to respect them. Like I said, I have always worked, I know who my boss is, I know what my job is and I know what is expected of me. I do not take advantage. Treat me with a little dignity.

Mr. Minenko: You had mentioned that from your own employment in the previous situation it was quite a bit different than at Westfair. Did other employees say similar types of things that other places they had worked at there was a friendlier environment kind of thing?

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes, I would say so.

Mr. Minenko: So this was to yourself and many other employees this sort of conflict, seemingly right from Day One you had mentioned. I can appreciate, because I did work in a place where there seemed to be a little bit more co-operation between the union and management than what you suggest. Could you suggest as to why, some of the reasons you think that might cause that attitude even from coffee breaks, from lunch breaks, I presume and so on?

* (1030)

Ms. Sourisseau: It is hard. What can I say? I do not know what it is. I just remember my first shift. We had finished working, and at that time we had to clean out the checkouts. Of course, the way you are situated, you do not always get to see the people you are working with. It is different shifts and stuff. Of course, we were cleaning at the same time and saying, hi, my name is

Gail, my name is Barb, how are you, trying to get to know your fellow workers. After we had finished doing that, it is still in my mind, we were all called over to the desk and the manager on that night started yelling, I do not know what you people think this place is, but I have applications this high and there is the door if you do not like it here. I thought—

An Honourable Member: From Day One?

Ms. Sourisseau: My first shift, I had been trained; this was first shift in the evening. I thought, what is he talking about? What have I done, what have the rest of us done? Here apparently, I guess—I found him very insecure—he must have thought we were talking about him. In fact, we were just trying to say hi, my name is Gail, you know, I am married, I have two kids, what is your name, where do you live. They sort of brought it on themselves. I do not know; it is just very hard. I really feel we need final offer selection with them. I find them very hard to deal with.

Mr. Minenko: You mentioned also in your presentation, you have a number of friends who belong to other unions and, I presume, friends who do not belong to any union at all.

Ms. Sourisseau: That is right; I do.

Mr. Minenko: Do these friends of yours, who work at other locations and who have employers other than Westfair, talk about the same type of problems that are at Westfair, this constant confrontation between yourself and management, this sort of we and them attitude which, I would certainly say, is such a terrible thing to have in any workplace? You are ultimately working to the same end; everybody wants to put a fair dollar in their pocket so that they can provide the things for their families that they need and so on. Do other workers, friends of yours and such, who work for other unions, other companies, talk about the attitude at their workplace? Is it as bad or is it better than at Westfair?

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes, I have a wide range of friends, going right from doctors, policemen, nurses, gas company employees, postal workers. One is a big corporate executive for another big grocery chain. My friends are a wide range, very close friends, we all pretty well have the same views, even the doctor. They do not really belong to a union per se. They are fighting with the Government to get better standards and stuff, but when we sit down and talk about these things, they all agree that almost no matter where you go, there is a conflict between workers and management. Of course, management, why is morale so bad? Well, trust us a little bit. Sure there are ones that take advantage. I agree the ones that take advantage do need discipline. Why should I stand there for five hours and work and someone walk around and get paid and do nothing? No matter where you go, this goes on. Like I say, no matter where you go, this goes on. I think it is almost like that anywhere.

Mr. Minenko: But people that are members of unions, let us say, when they talk about the attitude at their

workplace, is it as confrontational as what you have? Is it as bad or better in other places?

Ms. Sourisseau: Some of them talk that they enjoy their work and their management. Yes, things are better. You know, it is not all bad.

Mr. Minenko: So you say that really if there was a scale from one to 100 and 100 being a great place to work and one would be a place that there is constant confrontation, that Westfair would be No. 1 in confrontation, from what you have heard from friends and other people? I know no one could ever do an analysis or anything like this, but from what people—

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minenko, I would like to advise you, I do not think that line of questioning really has anything to do with the lady's presentation. Please try to keep your questions to what the presenter is—and not make statements or try to get an opinion out of the presenter. Mr. Minenko.

Mr. Minenko: That comes right out of what she was saying about the workplace environment, and I think I would like to hear the witness on that. So if you would not mind answering that.

Ms. Sourisseau: Where would I rate them, one to 10? One being low on the list? That is really hard. It really is. There are so many situations that happen to so many people. Some being so unfair and so petty and picky that you just cannot. You just cannot start to nitpick all that.

Mr. Minenko: About the first selection process, can you explain how you think the first offer selection process works as it is presently presented?

Ms. Sourisseau: Final offer?

Mr. Minenko: Yes, final offer selection, sorry.

Ms. Sourisseau: Well, I realize how it works. You have so many days, 60 to 90 days, to apply previous to negotiations. After a strike there is a length of time. It only works if the workers want it to work. We take a vote; the company does not say, let us do it; the union does not, it is the workers who decide. We are the ones who are hurting, who need the assistance if we need it.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Patterson had a question first.

Mr. Patterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Thank you for appearing, Ms. Sourisseau. We appreciate it very much, and I would like to point out to you and have it on the record for all presenters that the Liberal Party is listening most carefully to all presenters. Some of the disputes you have been listening to are over the fact that the Members opposite have a habit of presenting a 10-minute speech before every 30-second question, and it is the same record over and over that we get a little tired of hearing. They are not listening very carefully to all presenters.

I would just like to follow up on a question of Mr. Storie's about this matter of getting your hours reduced.

Obviously, from the management point of view, they are trying to reduce costs, but is there some point in the number of hours worked or the number of years worked where you are entitled to benefits and below that you are not?

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes.

Mr. Patterson: Is that one of the costs that get reduced. At what stage do you become entitled to the benefits?

Ms. Sourisseau: At what stage—

Mr. Patterson: Is it after some specific number of years of service?

Ms. Sourisseau: It is 32 hours that we get a better pension and things like that. Of course I will not reach that, I am sure.

Mr. Patterson: You mean that is after you are at the stage where you are working 32 hours a week or more?

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes, 32 hours, and right now I am only getting guaranteed 24. I do not think there is any way that I will ever get to 32, unless it is something new in our contract, which I do not believe the company would ever go for.

Mr. Patterson: Is there something in the contract that entitles you to get up to 32, say after some years of seniority? Do you mean that nobody starting now could ever get up to 32 hours?

Ms. Sourisseau: No, there is no full-time. There is a percentage, to be honest, I am not quite sure, I think it is 16 percent of all Westfair employees will be full-time. That is in our contract and that will be maintained.

Mr. Patterson: I am sorry, Mr. Chairperson, I cannot hear the presenter over the comments that are going back and forth. I am sorry, Ms. Sourisseau, would you mind just repeating that, please, so I could hear it.

* (1040)

Ms. Sourisseau: As it stands right now, 9 percent of Westfair employees are full-time. That means if one should quit a full-time position, they will move one up. The rest of us are just in that particular guarantee which I mentioned before. I do not believe Westfair would ever hire—hopefully, maybe they will up that percentage a little bit, but that still leaves the majority of people just receiving their few hours a week.

Before I can receive any benefits, I believe I need 32 hours a week, which I did have when I first started. I never got to 32, but I was at 30. It never exceeded that, and then of course it went down from that to eight to nine hours a week. Then, in the contract which we signed after that, it gave me 21 and now 24.

Mr. Patterson: I understand then that this 32 hours, that is equivalent to four days a week, that is when they consider it full-time and get the benefits. How

would the actual wage rate—is there a significant difference between the starting rate and then somebody who has had two, three or five years' seniority? How long does it take, for instance, to get from the, let us say, the starting rate to the full rate, if there is a difference?

Ms. Sourisseau: There is a difference. You get your raises on the number of hours you worked. If you are receiving eight to nine hours a week, it could take you—the first raise is 540 hours. At eight to nine hours a week, that is going to take quite a while to get to that first raise. You could be there two, three years, I have not calculated it, before you get your first raise.

Mr. Patterson: We have 540 hours, it would be roughly a quarter of a year of work, prorating it. They are looking at a little over 2,000 hours as being full-time hours for a year. Is there some other number of hours, say after 2,000 hours, which would be equivalent to a year of full-time work, that you then get another step? How many steps are there up to the top rate?

Ms. Sourisseau: I cannot really say exactly how many hours, but I know you have to keep on putting in so many hours to get raises, and at the number of hours you get, it takes a long time.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Patterson, I just want to advise you, your Party has a copy of the contract. The hours and everything are outlined in that. They were gone through yesterday with Mr. Smith here. The NDP also have a copy of the contract. They know what is in it. These questions really are to deal with the contract and are not necessarily pertinent to the presenter. Please keep your questions—

Mr. Patterson: I was not aware of that. Thank you very much again, Ms. Sourisseau.

Mr. Rose: Ms. Sourisseau, as my colleague said, we, unlike the two other Parties, like to get a balanced and objective view on these things. Yesterday we heard from Mr. Smith of Westfair, and unfortunately I was not able to question him because he had to go on a plane. I hope he made it, because it is nice to be home with your family on the weekend.

You were on the payroll of SuperValu, is it, when the strike occurred in 1987?

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes.

Mr. Rose: When did you first join SuperValu?

Ms. Sourisseau: 1981.

Mr. Rose: When you were bargaining in 1987, was there any FOS provision in the contract with SuperValu?

Ms. Sourisseau: No.

Mr. Rose: Ms. Sourisseau, when you were bargaining in 19—when would be the previous contract, '84 or '85?

Ms. Sourisseau: What was it?'87,'85?

Mr. Rose: Whatever, the previous contract. Was there then an FOS provision in the contract for the union and the company?

Ms. Sourisseau: Not that I am aware of.

Mr. Rose: When you are now in negotiations or close to it, will there be an FOS provision in that contract?

Ms. Sourisseau: I hope so.

Mr. Chairman: Again, Mr. Rose, yesterday we discussed a contract and—

Mr. Rose: This is very relevant. You will see where I am getting at.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Mr. Rose.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Chairman, even this Bill repeals FOS, will there still be a provision for bargaining in the 1990 contract for FOS for Westfair Foods employees?

Ms. Sourisseau: If it is repealed?

Mr. Chairman: I think that type of questioning is not fair to the presenter. She is not a negotiator, and it is difficult to talk about the future contract.

Mr. Rose: Listen, I am very brief in my questioning. Let me at least ask questions. The Government does not want to ask questions; we do.

Ms. Sourisseau: I am up here—I am a worker. I believe in my union. I am a strong union member. I came here because I believe in FOS. I was very nervous to come, as you well know. I really feel that I cannot answer these questions properly, that someone from my union will answer them for you.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Chairman, I did not mean to be unfair in that, and I want you to be very relaxed, really.

Ms. Sourisseau: I am trying.

Mr. Rose: I am sorry about that. I want to explain to you that I virtually every week talk to several of the cashiers and people who work at SuperValu, and I think they have found me to be always friendly and—

An Honourable Member: Likable.

Mr. Rose: —likable. We are in a position here where the Chairman has said we cannot make statements, and therefore I am asking questions. I will start making some statements.

We heard yesterday from Mr. Smith of Westfair—

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Rose, this is not a place to make statements. I must advise you once again.

Mr. Rose: It is a preamble, and I am sure I am entitled to a small one. Now the Tories are going to put closure

on this. You are getting a bit ridiculous, Mr. Chairman. Come on.

* (1050)

We heard yesterday, Ms. Sourisseau, that in the present contract—well, I will read it off: That the contracts at the present time in Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia contain FOS provisions right now. That was removed in 1986 for the Winnipeg operations. So therefore in 1987 there was no FOS, but that was reinstated for the 1990 contract. What I was really leading up to is this, a fact that is well-known amongst the employees of SuperValu that they do have an agreement not to precipitate strikes on either side and that FOS will come into place after mediation? Is that a well-known fact? I do not want it to be unfair, but have you heard of it before?

Ms. Sourisseau: FOS?

Mr. Rose: Written into the present contract that was assigned in '87.

Ms. Sourisseau: No.

Mr. Rose: Okay.

Ms. Sourisseau: You know I am really getting confused.

Mr. Chairman: A point of order here, the Honourable Minister.

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): Mr. Chair, I really feel it is so unfair to ask someone who has come up of their own free will and wants to give their opinions. We have heard her opinions and to have her be put in the position of not knowing all these questions, I do not think it is fair to the presenter. We should ask questions on what she has said, and let the union leaders make the presentations and then they will know these things. I really feel that we are putting Ms. Sourisseau in a very difficult position. I do not think this is fair to her.

With that I would hope that members of the committee would realize that when someone comes up who is just making a presentation with their own free will and from the heart as she has said, what she is feeling, that we should not put them in a position of not knowing, when she would not know these questions of asking them.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, thank you Mrs. Minister. You do not have a point of order, but you do have some good points there.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Chairman, well the point is relative as to whether—you know we are talking about FOS here, and we would expect that what we are here to discuss is FOS, that people, hopefully, would be able to discuss it with me. I certainly do not want to be unfair on that.

My question, my last question that I was leading up to, Mr. Chairman, for Ms. Sourisseau is do you feel, and do not feel bad if you do not know. I am not trying to be unfair. I am not trying to trick you. I mean maybe my style is that, but I do not want to appear like a lawyer or something like that. But if in 1986 it had not been removed, and I do not know which party or mutual agreement removed it in '86, but had it not been removed in—'83 I am sorry or whatever it was—and it had been in effect in 1987, do you feel that would have prevented that very ugly strike that took place in 1987 if you had been able to have final offer selection at that time as it had been previously in your contract?

Ms. Sourisseau: I cannot say for sure, but I can say that it would have been an option for us which is nice to know that you have some option for security.

Mr. Rose: What you are saying is that it is one more way perhaps to resolve an impasse.

Ms. Sourisseau: That is right.

Mr. Rose: We have had a bit of discussion here, quite a bit of discussion, about the atmosphere since the strike, and I think this is relative because we are coming into negotiations again. We have seen that you at least and some of your employees are not happy with the way they are treated by the management staff of SuperValu. Has that continued on till today? Is it improved somewhat since 1987?

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes, I mean, you know no matter where you work, you have good days, you have bad days. I really do not think this is really an issue. I do not know how we got on to that.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Chairman, Ms. Sourisseau, have you only worked in one of the SuperValu stores or do you rotate at all? Is that in the system?

Ms. Sourisseau: No. Just to the one.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Rose, do you have another question?

Mr. Rose: Yes, I do.

Mr. Chairman: Wait till I address you then. Carry on.

Mr. Rose: The feeling that you had of a bit of friction or some friction between the employees and management, have you any knowledge that that might exist in the other stores, at the other SuperValu stores?

Ms. Sourisseau: Well. I am sure it exists everywhere from time to time, no matter where you work. I do not know if this is the issue. Is it? Are we getting away from why I am here? I am here because I believe in FOS. What my employer and I bicker about, coffee breaks or whatever, really is not the issue. I do not think it is. I think we are just going on and on, and not getting to the facts that is what I am here for.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Rose, do you have one final question?

Mr. Rose: I have a number of questions, Mr. Chairman, for Ms. Sourisseau, but hopefully, if we are getting into friction, I did not intend to do that, but this was a really big issue yesterday on the part of the third Party in the Legislature to Westfair, about the relationships between the employees and the management. I think it is important, particularly since this was such an ugly strike, and we are coming into a new round of negotiations and us as a decision as to FOS and whether that might take this ugliness out and stop work stoppages and the all the ensuing problems that go with it, but my final question will be then and is that Mr. Smith, yesterday, made quite a strong case that relationships were very good and improving considerably because the Christmas party last year was well attended—

Floor Question: Not by me; not by me.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please; order, please. I must ask the audience to please refrain from comments.

Mr. Rose: —and this may be funny to the NDP, but they kept bringing it up and bringing it up and bringing it up—

Mr. Chairman: Order, please, Mr. Rose. I would ask the audience to please refrain from any interjections with the speaker. Mr. Rose, do you have a question?

Mr. Rose: My final question is: Would you consider that the lack of attendance or considerable attendance at a Christmas party would have anything to do with the relationship between management and employees? That is my simple question.

Ms. Sourisseau: No, I am going to respond to this. I have not been at a Westfair SuperValu do for a number of years. I went to two, and I guess the first one we went to—this is a cute little story—my husband and I, my husband went up the bar with another friend's wife, that I worked for, to get a drink, and all these girls were saying, oh, hello Mr. Cummings, hello Mr. Cummings. My husband and the other fellow did not know who Mr. Cummings was. He is one of the head guys at SuperValu. Well, jokingly, the other fellow said, oh Mr. Cummings, you must be somebody. Well, Mr. Cummings did not laugh or snicker. He just looked at them and said, like who the heck are you? I mean, my husband does not even work for SuperValu.

I mean, you want to get on to how you are treated, I have not gone to a Christmas party since then, not because of that fact, but Christmas party—I mean it is a time where people get together, there is happiness. You know what Christmas means. Mr. Cummings did not say, hi! Unless of course—you would have to be there. It was just—I do not know what to—I have not attended a Christmas party for years.

* (1100)

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Rose, did you have a final question there?

Mr. Rose: I just wanted to sincerely thank Ms. Sourisseau for her patience with me, and I hope we

can say, hi, next time I am in the store. Thank you very much.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Ms. Sourisseau, I will not be very long, because you have been up here some time and there are many presenters waiting. I know this was very nervous and difficult for you to come forward here today, and I appreciate that you did. I know that you probably felt nervous because of the atmosphere and unfamiliarity with it, but did you also feel in any way intimidated in coming because of your job? Did you feel in any way that there might be repercussions from Westfair that you are coming here and making some statements such as you are?

Ms. Sourisseau: No, I hope there is not. I am standing up for what I believe in, which is fair, and I do not think they should have to intimidate me in any way for this.

Mr. Plohman: I do not think so either, Ms. Sourisseau, and I appreciate that you have come. I do not want to talk about Christmas parties or contracts and whether they include FOS or not, because if the legislation is not repealed in this province, we will not need it in contracts. We will have FOS as an option for all contracts when the need arises.

I would just like to ask you, from what you have said earlier, about the discussions you have with your friends from all different walks of life, do you feel people are becoming aware of the importance of maintaining an alternative to strikes? Most people find them offensive, most of all the people involved, but to the public as well. Do you feel that the public is becoming more aware of this issue and the importance of it as an alternative to strikes in maintaining peace between management and labour in this province?

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes, I do.

Mr. Plohman: Do you believe FOS is anti-business?

Ms. Sourisseau: No. I think it is there for both sides. I mean, a lengthy strike hurts us as the workers and it hurts the company.

Mr. Plohman: But it is an avenue, particularly when you are dealing with unreasonable employers. It is not just Westfair that we have heard these stories about, I think that is important to make here. There are many unreasonable employers, employers who just do not respect their employees, who do not want to give any sharing of any decision-making or any benefits to the employees. We have seen the stories at Unicity. We have seen the stories at Westfair and there are others.

Do you view the taking away of FOS as—the Government wants to take this away. We do not really understand why they would want to take something that is reasonable away. Do you believe that it is a direct action on behalf of the Government to perpetuate and assist those kinds of unfair, paranoid and arrogant attitudes on behalf of certain employers in this province?

Ms. Sourisseau: What you are saying is, if they do take it away—yes, I do. It needs to be there to try to

help solve these things, like I said before, for both sides.

Mr. Plohman: So you can only see then that the only reason that the Government wants to take this away is to help those kinds of businesses continue that kind of attitude.

Ms. Sourisseau: Yes.

Mr. Plohman: That is extremely unfortunate. I appreciate that you have come here and made your statements, because I think that is a very important piece of information to enlighten the public as to the true reasons for the Government doing something. It is totally unreasonable. I think that the Liberal Party, we are hopeful, will understand the kind of presentations you are making and listen to them, and support the position we are taking that this is reasonable, just as you are making today.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Are there any further questions? If not, I thank you very much, Ms. Sourisseau, for your presentation.

Ms. Sourisseau: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: We have a gentleman who was here yesterday and would like to make a presentation. We also have a couple of walk-in people who said they cannot come back later or this afternoon. Is it the will of the committee that we hear the people who are on the list and who were here yesterday first? Okay, is that the will of the committee? -(interjection)- Good. I will call Mr. Kenneth Emberley then, No. 63, on your list to come forward, please. Mr. Emberley, you have a copy of your presentation?

Mr. Kenneth Emberley (Private Citizen): I am sorry, this is a verbal presentation, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, that is fine. Please proceed then.

Mr. Emberley: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Kenneth Emberley. I want to thank you very much for being able to appear at your Standing Committee on Industrial Relations. I think it is one of the finest institutions in our Legislature, like the Law Amendments Committee—and for the public to be allowed to appear before you and give you information for the general public and to add to the information that the Liberal and the Conservatives Parties need to make a wise decision on this.

I have personal experience in this, so I want to give you a little background. I will try and limit my—can you have your conversation in the back, if you do not mind?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, please, I would like to ask the people who are in the audience there, please keep your remarks very quiet so that we can hear the presenter.

Mr. Emberley: I just want to give a tiny bit of background so that you will understand what this lady

was talking about when she was up here at the last. She did a wonderful job.

As a token of his power and policy, more than as a money saver, Mr. Fick (phonetic) reduced wages during his first meeting with the union. When he refused to come up with what they considered was a living wage, they struck. When the strikers heard about a move that he had hired 300 armed Pinkertons to come to Homestead and guard his new strikebreakers, the strikers armed themselves and prepared to resist what they considered an invasion. People were killed on both sides and then the state militia was ordered to protect the mills and the strikebreakers.

There has always been legislation; there has always been power. They built a strong union, the International Association of Bridge and Structural Workers, which worked at peace with their employers for years. Then in 1905, a series of mergers took place, and the American Bridge Company formed a whole group of companies across the country. Then they expanded into the National Erectors Association which embraced nearly every firm building with steel. Those firms that formed, they had been independent and friendly with the union, were advised to participate in the general policy of the association. They soon split, and there was a strike. To prevent trade unions from being conquered and detailed, they kept together. But the story of the strike is a story in Clarence Darrow's *For The Defense*, one of the most brutal military things. It reminds you of El Salvador and Chile under the United States control today.

Clarence Darrow's *For The Defense* is one of my research papers which I wish you to study as a background paper to understand this legislation. One of the other most important papers is *Profits Without Production* by Seymour Melman. You cannot imagine the intimidation stories that appear in the main news media about what is happening in the industrial scene, what is happening in the industrial workplace. It is only when you hear nice people like Mr. Smith of Westfair, and nice people like the union people that were here that tell their two different sides of the story that you begin to figure out what is really happening.

I want to recommend to you that you leave Bill 31 to repeal final offer selection, and that you defeat this Bill. I recommend that you leave the final offer selection legislation for five or at least four years until you can get a proper record of its effectiveness. I feel we have a very serious need for legislation to support a reduction in confrontation and conflict.

I wrote a paper 11 years ago on reduced confrontation and conflict after watching this person and another person fighting in the Legislature like children beating up somebody in a back lot. I was never so ashamed in all my life of their behaviour and the attitudes that they portrayed. Reading the paper over again after 1983, when I joined my first union in my life, I looked back at the paper and I saw there was a good half a page of a fanatic diatribe against the fanatics and the trade unions that were interfering with business right to make all the profit they wanted and to run business the way they wanted. I realized that I myself, like most of the public, have been manipulated by propaganda

into hating unions and working people who are fighting for their rights.

It is so funny because my brother-in-law was a carpenter union man all his life. I was a moderately low-income worker for most of my life, and I always fought for what I thought was the working people.

In this Profits Without Production, the three excerpts which I am going to give over as background papers to the committee detail the collapse of the United States industrial system's ability to manufacture at a profit. They adopted new management techniques based on the Harvard Business School's principles of managing for short-term profit, gradually stopped managing for low-cost minimum cost production efficiency, started concentrating on maximum profit and increasing management wages, increasing management control of the workplace.

There has been a steady effort from about the 1960s up until at least 1985 to exert greater authoritarian control over the labour force. It is well documented, and Noam Chomsky's learned papers over the years have gone into considerable detail on this. Seymour Melman, who is a very knowledgeable writer, has gone into some detail, and I would like to just give you quickly a technology bill of rights that he mentions to give you a background to what you are doing in your final offer selection. He suggests there is a need in the nation for a technology bill of rights.

1) A community has to produce in order to live. As a result, it is the obligation of the economy to organize people to work.

2) The well being of working people and their communities must be given the highest priority in determining the way in which production is carried out.

3) Basing technological and production decisions on narrow economic grounds of profitability has made working people in communities the victims rather than the beneficiaries of change.

4) Given the widespread scope and rapid rate of introduction of new technologies, societies require a democratically determined institutional rather than individual response to change taking place. And this is one of the things that came in this final offer selection legislation. Otherwise, the social costs of technological change will be borne by those least able to pay it, the unemployed workers in shattered communities.

Those that work have a right to participate in the decisions that cover their work and shape their lives. That is what this final offer selection is about.

6) The new automation technologies and the sciences that underline them, like the operation of super large stores with computers, are products of worldwide, centuries long accumulation of knowledge. Accordingly, working people and their community have a right to share in the decisions about and the gains from the new technology.

That is just one of the little papers I have included for you.

Crossing the line from an intellectual magazine called Penthouse, December 1989, is a major article on the

Roman Catholic Church, which as a United Church person I also understand and co-operate with, as union people co-operate with business and business co-operates with workers. They detail the fanatic hatred of unions of the Catholic Church in the 1940s and then the whole revolution that took place among the Catholic bishops when they disagreed with their Pope, their general public and the business community. Of course, this is nothing new.

In the tribute that our wonderful religious professor Carl Ridd gave to Olaf Palme, he described how in 1917 the Methodist Church issued its first incredibly severe indictment of the industrial system on how it oppressed working people. If you have been reading books and magazines, since 1980 every one of the main Christian churches in North America and in the United Kingdom has bitterly criticized the oppressive operation of the super new neo-conservative business community. So I just want to throw that little piece of literature in for you.

* (1110)

As a background to this effort to reduce confrontation and conflict, to reduce the bitterness that happens during strikes and can happen in industrial nations, which was discussed at length yesterday, I want to include for you an article called "The Poor Get Poorer" and just read you a brief paragraph which I checked personally with Hugh McCullum, the editor of the United Church Observer.

This was delivered in this hot bed of leftist activity, St. Andrews River Heights United Church in River Heights. On April 14, 1983, over 200 people heard a thrilling and chilling address. Every year I am a little more proud to be a member of this church which has had such a distinguished procession of moderators over the last 20 years, four of whom I have heard personally.

Hugh McCullum has made three trips to Central America and this January spent a month in Guatemala. He had many meetings with clergy and ordinary people. He mentioned a tendency toward fascism four times in his address. Guatemala is 75 percent Indian peasants, mostly living on subsistence farms in the highlands. Twenty five percent white Spanish people own and run the country and its businesses. Many of them now live in Florida and Miami and enjoy the wealth from their land as absentee landlords.

Nelson Rockefeller—in 1969, after an extensive tour of Central and South America, this United States Cabinet officer prepared a 157-page report for the State Department. It has been studied under the Freedom of Information Act. He said the Roman Catholic church was no longer a trustworthy friend of the United States Government and business. They were letting priests not only teach the Indian peasants about co-operatives and credit unions, they were even teaching them about labour unions, which made them an enemy of the United States Government and business.

The country could steadily become a less favourable locale for U.S. business to make profits if the peasants gained even a small measure of financial and political independence. Nelson Rockefeller mentioned and

recommended bringing into the area fundamental Protestant sects of what we now call the immoral minority. He also thought they might need financial assistance.

There are quotations in here, and they have been published widely in the papers, of the different Catholic bishops in the United States trying to puzzle out why the Protestant churches have been receiving direct and indirect CIA funding like the Contras, and why within 11 years the most vicious dictatorship in Latin America, in Guatemala, was headed by a born-again Christian in a country that had switched from being Roman Catholic.

That is the main reason why the Roman Catholic church turned off their liberation theology, on the orders of the United States President and the CIA.

Here is a little article called "Blood, Sweat and Tears" on the non-union meat packing plants in the United States. It will make you weep.

I am concerned at the anti-business image that is creeping into our country; anti-business image is a big drawback; it has a strong negative psychological impact on business both in and out of the city, said Ted George, the director of the Business Development Corporation.

Bad business rap. There is a payroll tax. You will notice in Ontario, they inserted a payroll tax to collect money from corporations who have a large low-paid staff and pay little taxes, and they are using it to finance Medicare. So they have picked up on the idea that was tried here by a radical left-wing Government.- (interjection)- No present people included.

This report on Wednesday, February 14, was preparation for these hearings. While the Winnipeg General Strike occurred more than 70 years ago, its legacy apparently still scares away business. Winnipeg has had an image of very confrontational labour relations.

I wonder why. It is very hard to figure out. For instance, to be competitive within Canada, the report recommended the current ratio of personal income taxes be reduced by 2 to 4 percent. The federal Government has reduced it, I think, 8 percent. Corporate taxes should be reduced 1 to 3 points. That is interesting.

I have here a little report that illustrates that people pay \$60 billion in taxes in Canada to the federal Government, and corporations, on over \$100 billion in profits, paid from 1986 to 1988, \$2 billion one year, \$3 billion the next year, \$4 billion the next year. That is what corporations paid in federal taxes.

There were 93,000 corporations which did not pay any taxes on \$27 billion profit. I wonder why that is an unfavourable business climate. My God!

Here is an interesting thing. We take the three-year period from 1985-1987. Hourly wages increased 8.4 percent over three years. Salaried workers' incomes, 12.7 percent; managers' income, like that nice Mr. Smith from Westfair, only 22 percent. Senior executive salaries, 23.9 percent. The total compensation for senior executives, 43.7 percent. Over the same period, the

cost of living increased by 13 percent. Thus, for every category of worker in Canada, except management and senior executives, wages and salary increases were less than inflation. They were all poorer at the end of the three years than they were at the start.

In real income terms, the hourly workers lost 4.6 percent; senior executives increased 30.7 percent in wages. Now what was this anti-business climate, the man said, in which the poor rich people and the corporations are being driven to the limit? I want you to read that.

We are trying to balance up the forces struggling and bargaining in the workplace. There are the corporations and there are working people. The working people would like to form an association like the businessmen. The businessmen have a Chamber of Commerce, which is, in effect, a high-class union. It is a high-class union because they are all rich people. The businesspeople have their association operating across Canada and it has very high prestige.

Some people think that the working class should be allowed to associate too, so they can bargain in a position of strength against the other people's collected financial and political power. Now, what is the effect of this bargaining process? I have here a little report that was delivered as a public speech at the Charleswood Motor Hotel on the 7th of October 1989, The Coming Economic Crisis, based on Statistics Canada.

It suggested that during a 42-year period investment by international corporations in Canada was \$3.9 billion. During the 42 years, the companies retained earnings in the little companies they bought with that \$3.9 billion and the companies grew to be worth \$72 billion. Some people would consider that they made a profit on that deal, and while they were doing that, they sent \$58 billion of profits to the U.S.A., almost all tax exempt.

* (1120)

Frances Moore-Lapy is one of the giant intellectuals heading up the Food First Institute in San Francisco. I visited them and spent an hour there when I was on my trip to the Fate of the Earth conference in Nicaragua last June. She talks about rediscovering America's values. We must debate again America's values, the kind of policies we want to have our country run if we are going to be a civilized country, our fundamental beliefs.

Who is talking about levelling incomes? I am suggesting that differences must be kept within a reasonable range. Reasonable? To whom? To you? No, not just me. The gap between the income of the top and the bottom in the United States is among the most extreme in the world. Of the 14 industrial nations, there is only one, Spain, the former military dictatorship, that divides the income between the rich and the poor less fairly.

A U.S.A. corporative executive makes about 40 times more than the typical manufacturing worker, a gap that was widened by a third in the 1980s under Ronald Reagan. In Japan the gap is only sevenfold, not fortyfold.

Lee Iacocca makes his median annual income in three hours work. That is what the median annual income is in the United States. Lee Iacocca earns that much money in three hours. I think most Americans would consider this unreasonable. In "Profits Without Production" he details the fact that there are seven levels of management in Japan, between the top production manager and the factory worker. There are 12 levels of management in the U.S.A. One of the senior officers of Ford admitted that it would cut their costs \$2 billion if they removed the extra five layers of managerial and secretarial and clerical and administrative staff in their business corporations.

Now, what does all this have to do with what we are trying to do here today, final offer selection?

I worked for the Boeing airplane company for 15 years. We had a strike to form a union. I learned to hate the company during that strike, because I knew what was going on. After we got the strike settled, we got a union agreement, at last. It was only because of some sort of legislation called "first contract legislation" that was put in to help the lower classes to struggle against a company like the Boeing military airplane company, one of the richest corporations in the world, one of the most militarily, politically and economically powerful.

When it came time to renew our contract in 1983, I had in my hands a research paper that I picked out of Fortune magazine and it showed that in the four years from 1980 to 1983 the Boeing airplane company made \$500 million profit each year and paid not one cent of federal income taxes. Then when it came time to renew our contract the Boeing airplane company said they would never sign a contract until we installed the two-level system of wages, and started all the new workers at a lower wage system, because the corporations all across North America had agreed, among themselves, through the Business Council of National Issues and the Chamber of Commerce, that this would be a good thing for profits.

So, for our three-year contract, each year we got a little cash bonus almost equal to the cost of living and then at the third year when we negotiated our new contract in 1986, we were able to start with a 55-cent raise on the 1983 wages. We lost three years of wage raises, and every single person that has worked at the Boeing airplane company since 1986 has been cheated \$1.50 an hour to help the Boeing company.

If you do not think that eats at your heart every time you watch the management walk by, every time you think about the time to come up for the new contract, coming up this year, and then you read in the paper: "Labour laws spook investors," says a business lawyer. A wonderful Mr. Robert Watson told a legislative committee last night that the controversial law must be repealed if Manitoba wants to survive in the increasingly competitive national and international business climate. I visited Peru and China and the southern United States and they have much better labour laws.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please.

Mr. Emberley: Right now we are not competitive. Our labour costs are too high, and this legislation is one of those costs.

Now, do you know if our lawyer costs are too high? Our labour costs are too high. Our minimum wage is too high. Ronald Reagan was a hero to the business community and to Brian Mulroney because for 11 years he never allowed the minimum wage to rise. The minimum wage stayed the same for 11 years, and in wonderful Mr. Lougheed's country the minimum wage stayed the same for 11 years, another Ronald Reagan in Canada. A Bill Vander Zalm out there in the West.

Watson who represents management during negotiations told the all-Party committee that he had talked personally with representatives of 8 companies from Canada and the United States who are considering investment in Canada and they did not come. Well, thank God!

There is a new book by Noam Chomsky, one of the most distinguished persons in understanding the operation of the economy. His new book by Edward Herman, as co-author who is a specialist in terrorism is dedicated to Alex Carey, and Alex Carey has written a manuscript which is known and mentioned by Helen Caldicott, the lady who does not like nuclear war. It is a study of the 80 years' operation of the National Association of Manufacturers in the USA to control and manipulate public opinion. I just have another 20 minutes to finish my presentation, and I want to quote something to you very quickly. I will be brief, I will try and be as brief as all the other people were including Mr. Smith yesterday:

At the beginning of the century large scale professionally organized propaganda campaigns have been a key feature of the political activity of American business. In the words of Professor Key of Harvard University, "Businessmen are a small minority, highly vulnerable to political attack. They have to depend on something other than their votes; they have to use their wits and their money to generate a public opinion that acquiesces. For 50 years US business alone in the world made great progress toward the idea of a propaganda managed democracy. Since about 1970 business in other countries has begun to adopt the American model. This chapter will provide some account of the growth. This background will make it clear that the single novelty of the neo-Conservative movement of the 1970s which currently sets the political agenda in the US is making a definite attempt in Australia and has now come to Canada in 1976 to the Business Council on National Issues.

* (1130)

Four years later in 1913 a committee of the US Congress was established to investigate the mass dissemination of propaganda by the National Association of Manufacturers, the leading business organization of the time, the purpose of influencing legislation. The committee's report coincided with the beginning of World War I. It said: The aspirations of

the National Association of Manufacturers was so vast and far-reaching it excited one's admiration and fear, admiration for the genius which conceived them, fear for the effect the accomplishment of all these ambitions might have on a free democratic government such as ours."

I want to mention just particularly this quotation here has very definite relations to this final offer selection and reducing confrontation and conflict, as a strike approaches. It is very relevant to the discussion this lady made this morning. The test of this expectation was not long in coming. When the war ended in 1919 there was a confrontation between business and labour. Business was determined to roll back the limited union gains made under wartime conditions. There was a strike in 1919, the great steel strike. The central issue of the strike was, in the words of Sam Gompers, the right of wage earners to bargain collectively, like in a democratic country.

At the outset public opinion favoured the strikers who worked an 84-hour week. What is seven times 12? Six in the morning until six at night under notoriously bad conditions, seven days a week. Five days after the strike began, the steel corporation launched a campaign of full-page advertisements to urge the strikers to return to work. They denounced their leaders as trying to establish the Red rule of anarchy and Bolshevism, the strike as un-American, and suggested that the Huns had a hand in fomenting the strike—that is what the commission quoted.

The strike was monitored by a remarkable body called the Interchurch World Movement, which comprised of 26 Protestant churches. They produced a two-volume report which concluded that the strike was defeated by strikebreaking methods of the steel companies and their effective mobilization of public opinion against the strikers through the charges of radicalism, Bolshevism, the closed shop, none of which were justified by the facts, and through the hostility of the press giving biased and coloured news.

It sounds like yesterday, does it not? Under the influence of the steel companies the general press built up false Red charges to make the steel companies, the public lose sight of the real issues. Historian Robert Murray sums up the consequences: when the strike ended in January, 1920, the men had gained not a single concession; 20 lives had been sacrificed in the war; \$112 million in wages were lost. Backed by favourable public opinion, which was based on an exaggerated fear of Bolshevism, this corporation proved that not even 350,000 strikers could prevail against it.

I want to remind you that everything in this paper, and this is the paper, the same one I gave to the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. It is the same one I gave last year to the Law Amendments Committee, so it should have been available to all of you, any of you who wanted it. This paper details the National Association of Manufacturers in the U.S.A. and the Business Council National Institution in Winnipeg, in Manitoba and in Canada, which was created in 1976 to bring the same kind of program to Canada, and they elected Mr. Mulroney in 1984 and '88.

Now I ask you to remember if you need this kind of legislation to give the workers an opportunity and a

choice to fight fairly and to reduce confrontation. I humbly suggest, look at the dangerous, violent people sitting in this room. I never knew there were so many fierce, dangerous-looking women. They are like the people in my union; most of them are very decent, nice people. Mothers, wives, husbands, workers, almost as nice as you people sitting on that table, and very often their activities are a reaction to activities, and this never comes out in the biased media.

If there is a massive organized program across Canada, through free trade and every other legislated and propoganda program to lower the wages of the lower classes, the three-quarters of the people who make less than \$40,000 a year. In this carefully orchestrated program, I have some days picked out four articles in the paper just alone on wage propoganda against union people, a mass of propoganda sold day after day after day. I feel like the terrorists are coming through my television and radio. I shut it off. I buy the paper every second day now; I shut off my television; I shut off my radio because it is all propoganda. George Bush jumped out of my television the day before Christmas and said, I got another war going. I have found a little country I can beat up; Nicaragua is next.

This is the mental climate that you people are asked to use restraint and consider that the 150 chief executive officers of the Business Council on National Issues, who pay almost no taxes and who set all the policies for most of the Governments in Canada, that the policies are exactly opposite to from the three or four million people who go and vote every year, I think we need a little modest amount of legislation on behalf of the working class. I beg of you not to remove this final offer selection from the books.

I just want to tell you about my own personal career working with Boeing because of my understanding of the company and my understanding of its military operations—it is one the most important military companies in the world and the beneficiaries of star wars research. I went over and walked on the picket line beside those fierce Westfair ladies at SuperValu. I walked into the store and told the manager how ashamed I was of the way he was behaving. I vowed never to go into a Superstore again. I have been into Superstores twice with friends and never bought a thing; never buy a thing ever in a Superstore or any of the Westfair stores again. I do not buy anything in a Safeway store since they shut down my store at my corner and manipulated stores all around the city to be sure no competition could occur.

When I walked on the picket line with the lady, she told me, I work part time. My hours are flexible. I do not know if I am going to be called into work tomorrow. The company says, if you want your job tomorrow to work for four hours, you sit home for eight hours and listen to the telephone. If we decide to phone you, we will phone you and tell you you can work tomorrow.

I have to work eight hours for nothing every second day to get a job to work four hours the next day. The company will not institute a simple little administrative procedure to say, if we need 500 temporary workers, we will phone a quarter of you in this two-hour period of the day and we will phone a quarter of you in this

two-hour period of the day, and you will only have to stay home two hours a day to answer your phone if you want to come into work tomorrow.

But no, I have to work for nothing for the company for eight hours just to get my little puny job at the minimum wage. That is intimidation. I cannot go out and get another job with a decent company at a living wage. I have to go and work for Westfair because I am required to sit at the phone just to keep the part-time job I have.

I will tell you how it affected me, because I worked for Simpson Sears, the great and wonderful Simpson Sears of Polo Park, for Rose Cormack (phonetic). About eight times I worked overtime. Although the law of the land compels them to pay me overtime, they never would. They would never pay overtime. Rose Cormack said that and the manager said it. We never pay overtime. Sometime in the next three or four weeks we will find a time when we are slack, we will send you home an hour early. You worked two hours overtime, we will send you home two hours early someday when it is convenient for us. But we do not obey the law. We do not pay overtime.

Rose said, I just love the part-time workers, because you get a part-time worker working six hours a day, 18 hours a week, you do not pay unemployment insurance, you do not pay pension, you do not pay this, you do not pay that, the worker covers all that. When the worker comes in, and they are almost all female, she works six hours a day and she never worked yesterday, so she is rested. She is just raring to go. I get eight hours of work out of her and I only have to pay her six. Is that not wonderful?

The company is worried that there is an anti-business climate, they cannot make a go of it. You read "Profits Without Production" and read the incredible increase in profits in corporations in the last 20 years. The corporations in North America have abandoned the basic contract they had with people to run a production facility in the country. They are making bigger profits operating overseas.

* (1140)

Now the same oppressive techniques they use in El Salvador, in the Philippines, in Mexico, they are bringing into Canada. They say, you want a job, you lower your minimum wage to that of North Dakota. You want a job, you lower your minimum wage to the \$1.60 in Texas. They tell the Texans you lower and work for the 65 cent an hour minimum wage in the Contadora strip of factories along the Mexican border. We can operate a factory in Mexico at 65 cents an hour, and it is a stable labour force. I think in this article several places they mentioned they need a stable labour force, and I think Mr. Smith mentioned that yesterday.

In Mexico the army provides a stable labour force; in El Salvador the army provides a stable labour force; in the Philippines the army provides a stable labour force. In the United States there are only 13 percent union workers. The police, the news media and the public provide a stable labour force. In Canada we have 35 percent union workers; in Europe they have 50 to 60 percent.

We should be telling the companies that do not want to come in Canada: if you come from an uncivilized, primitive country that has not established social legislation to make it a modern, civilized, humane country, where one person in six goes to bed hungry every night, one person in six will never ever be well educated or have a permanent job at a living wage, and where the wages have been deliberately lowered to the point where a black person or a white person working in the minimum wage in half of the states in the United States cannot make enough to support one person so that women have to live separately from men and get welfare to run their children. The only good job they can make is selling crack on the streets, and that is a Government-business policy. Now I ask you, if this is an unfavourable business climate, I am just thrilled to death because we do not want those rotten, corrupt U.S.A. companies up here that want us to work for \$3 an hour.

We have two billionaires in Canada, two billionaires of the world's 20. We have lots of rich people. The real endangered species, as a naturalist, is working people making a full-time job at a living wage and adequate minimum wages. So I ask you to retain this piece of legislation on the books which gives a modest, modest piece of legislation to help the working people and to help decent business employers so that when they have a confrontational situation, a difficult situation, there is a little more pressure on them to bargain in faith and come to a negotiated settlement. I have never heard of a well-run business that was driven out of business by their union. Do you think working people are so dumb? I bet you almost every working person has more brain power than 97 percent of the economists in Canada. They can figure out they lose money in a strike. Do you not think that they strike for principle? Do you not think some of these people have principles? I am sorry to get emotional. I am like Helen Caldicott.

Mr. Chairman: Does that conclude your remarks, Mr. Emberley?

Mr. Emberley: Yes, it does, Mr. Chairman. I thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you. I hope I contributed something to an understanding of the basic issue behind this. That was my serious intent.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Storie has a question.

Mr. Storie: Thank you. Mr. Emberley, your remarks were very moving and, I think, quite enlightening. I hope that our other committee Members here today, who on reflecting not only on the Bill before us but on labour legislation generally, understand that we are talking about rolling back legislation that supports about 35 percent of the working people in the Province of Manitoba, many, in Manitoba, who would already consider those people who are protected to the extent the law allows by the rights to organize and bargain collectively.

We are talking about only 35 percent of the people who have these kinds of rights now; 65 percent of the workforce have been, in effect, left on their own, although they are covered somewhat by The

Employment Standards Act. They are much more at the mercy even than the people that we have heard today.

That is a scary thought, that is indeed a scary thought, and it makes me believe that whoever supports the rolling back of final offer selection, or first contract legislation, or any other labour laws that we have in the province is genuinely going in the wrong direction.

My question to you is, you mentioned we have heard today that people believe that if final offer selection had been in place, for example, when the Westfair strike took place, that it would have been settled. People would not have had to walk and jeopardize losing their homes and separating families and creating all kinds of tensions. Do you believe that final offer selection has created an imbalance in labour relations, and labour-management, as some people have suggested, those who oppose final offer selection?

Mr. Emberley: Mr. Chairman, no, I do not believe that final offer selection legislation has created any imbalance. It has modified the balance. It has taken a balance that I would say in the past was maybe 70, 65 percent in favour of business, and has maybe reduced that 70 percent to 66 percent, or the 65 percent imbalance down to 61 percent in favour of business, and given labour a little tiny bit more of a chance. I fought Hitler in the Second World War. I think we are in the same kind of battle today.

I am an environmentalist, I am a peace activist. For seven years of my life I am a trade unionist. I am totally impartial, bilingual, I am a proud liberal, small "l" liberal. I am a proud big "L" Liberal part of the time; a hell of a lot of the time I am fighting tooth and nail to make the Liberal Party so I can be proud of them. I really believe in my heart, and I have written and told my bosses in Ottawa, I have told them personally, I have told Paul Martin Jr., that I hope the Liberals never ever get re-elected again unless they change their anti-business (sic) attitude, in the federal Party, that brought in such bitter legislation under Trudeau in the 1970s that smashed the trade union movement federally and permitted the anti-strike legislation that took away the right to strike—so many working people. One of the reasons why I just despise Mr. Bourassa is his fiercely anti-labour stance, anti-working people stance.

I am not anti-business. I ran a little business for 11 years in this city and dealt with a 1,000 companies. I quoted for you here the number of business companies in the United States that had friendly agreements with their unions back in 1908. There are businesses in the United States today that have reasonably good relations with their unions. I do not see in a democracy that it should be necessary to destroy a union to have an ideal democracy with one party, the capitalist party, which, to Ronald Reagan and Brian means capitalism is the same as democracy is the same as Christianity. It is one thing. I cannot visualize that as a true democracy and that is why so many of us working people, and some of us educated working people—I have been to university, and many people have been to university and many people who have never been near a university are smarter than any university graduate. I am concerned at the trends in my country.

* (1150)

I am going down as soon as this meeting is over to run into a Meech Lake hearing and spend the whole of Saturday afternoon fighting the people who want to put in a security council of 11 bullies to run my country.

It is the most incredible thing. I do not want anything to be anti-business. I want to be pro-business. But I want to be pro good business. I want to be pro good working people. A businessman should be willing to pay modest taxes and willing to pay modest wages and willing to run a healthy workplace and allow the factory to be in a place that it does not poison the countryside.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Chairperson, I appreciate Mr. Emberley's comments. I have no further questions, although to say I am sure Mr. Emberley is aware of a famous parable by one of my favourite people, Tommy Douglas, about the mice continuing to elect black cats and white cats when mice should be electing mice. I want to tell him that he does not have to change the Liberal Party. There is already a Party that supports working people.

Mr. Emberley: I will not be political. I could not be political. I am totally non-political. You people all know that I talk to all the Parties and work with all the Parties in this community. This is an all-Party committee and I am very proud of you when you do the right thing. I am kind of ashamed of you when you do the wrong thing. But that is nothing new to you.

Thank you very much. I appreciated it.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Are there any further questions? Mr. Rose.

Mr. Rose: I just wanted to sincerely thank Mr. Emberley for his well thought out and comprehensive brief. It certainly gives us a lot of food for thought. We appreciate the work he has put into it and to have come down here today and wait for his presentation. Thank you very much.

Mr. Emberley: Thank you, Mr. Rose. I hope you will glance at some of the papers, as well as some of the other people.

Mr. Chairman: Just a minute, Mr. Emberley, Mr. Plohman has a question.

Mr. Plohman: I just want to thank Mr. Emberley for his comments here today and hope he is successful in his goal to bring some reason into the Liberal Party. I think the message was well taken by all of us here today. It is only unfortunate that more of the Minister's colleagues were not here to hear it. They could have learned something.

Mr. Emberley: It has been my lifelong work for the last 20 years, to bring a little bit of rational intelligence into the policies of all three Parties at different times in this wonderful community. My mentioning of one distinguished group of intelligent people here today does not include the other two distinguished intelligent

groups. I have tried to get them to adopt rational policies too, many, many times.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Emberley. I believe our next presenter is a person from No. 4 on your list, who is from out of town, who would like the opportunity to present now. Is it the will of the committee that we give her an opportunity? Mr. Rose.

Mr. Rose: I do not really disagree with that, but I hope we are being immaculately fair in our—I guess my question is if there is anybody from yesterday who is waiting.

Mr. Chairman: No. Not that I am aware of.

Mr. Rose: Okay, I just wanted to clear that up.

Mr. Chairman: I would like to call Linda Fletcher then, No. 4 on your list.

Ms. Linda Fletcher (Private Citizen): For those waiting, I just wish to tell them that I do have a two-hour drive. I really appreciate—

Mr. Chairman: Speak into the mike, please. Would you mind standing in front so we get both mikes there? Thank you.

Ms. Linda Fletcher (Private Citizen): My name is Linda Fletcher, and I am from Ashern, Manitoba. I am going to be brief. I am usually animated, that is why I wanted to go to the side, but I will just go back a little bit. I want to speak for final offer selection, and against the fact that it is trying to be repealed.

I am a social worker, and I wish to tell you a little bit about my experience a number of years ago about being involved in negotiations. It was the very first time I was ever involved in negotiations. I was really excited by it. I had one little pet proposal that I thought I would have an opportunity to talk about, and so I was very excited to be in the room with the staff representatives, and the other people, and the people from management. I was just amazed by the different atmosphere that occurred in that room. It was just striking to me that instead of being able to take the proposals, and talk rationally about them, talking about how they could be helpful for employees to do their jobs which in my component is helping people, suddenly there was just one atmosphere of very, very confrontation and negativism. There was sarcasm; there was putting down. I was truly amazed by the atmosphere in that room, because I knew that the people representing management had social service backgrounds, the same as I did.

Well, I thought about this when it came time for this final offer selection piece of legislation. I wanted to talk for it because I think it could be a tremendous motivator in having an atmosphere in negotiations that is cooperative.

I wish to talk about an example in my line of work which is marriage counselling. When I see a couple, usually their marriage has very much deteriorated. Both

sides have got to the point where they are not communicating well at all, and both the positions are very, very stagnated. They come to me as a counsellor.

I want to use an example. We will say that the husband is saying, I want her to meet me at the door, smiling with her make-up on and her pretty dress. I want her to let me sit down, get my slippers, have a hot meal prepared, and so forth, and so on, and then at night wear a nice, little negligee. And she is saying, I want him to come home right from work, before he comes home I want him to phone and see what I need. In fact, he should not need to phone, he should know what I need and anticipate it, and bring it to me. I want him to do all the work in the jar that I have for him, and then after that we can go and visit my mother.

So they present their two positions, and I say, all right, I am going to select one of these positions. By magic, your home is going to have to be that way from now on. That is the way the house is going to be. And then they say, do we have a chance to negotiate this before you select. And I say, go ahead and do that, and I bet you they are going to start compromising.

But that is not how marriage counselling happens. What happens is, you get a couple who are motivated. They want that marriage to stay together, that is why they are in my office. They are willing to negotiate, they are willing to listen. They are willing to hear each other because they have that motivation. They want to work it out. They want to make sure that it is satisfactory for both of them. They have a tremendous commitment to that.

Now, obviously, labour relations are different, I appreciate that. I am not naive. But I see final offer selection as being the motivator. Obviously, the material that I read saying that of all the applications for it, 85 percent of them withdrew and then negotiated a contract. It is obvious they they were feeling, rather than having this individual select one or the other, let us go back and reasonably and rationally negotiate because there is a commitment and there is a reason why we want to do this. So all I wanted to say is, I think this legislation, final offer selection, is a tremendous motivator in having rational, reasonable and restrained negotiating.

* (1200)

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Fletcher. Are there any questions?

Mr. Storie: Mr. Chairperson, and thank you, Ms. Fletcher. I notice it is still snowing out and I hope your two-hour drive is achievable. I hope you can make it back home.

Ms. Fletcher: As long as the car does not break down again, I will be fine.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Chairperson, I think you made the point that many have made and that is that final offer selection is the motivator, that neither side wants to be caught in the final analysis supporting or defending a proposal that is indefensible. I guess I was going to ask whether

you have had any personal connections with people who have used final offer selection, if there is anyone in Ashern, if there is any circumstance out there where final offer selection has been used.

Ms. Fletcher: Not that I am aware of.

Mr. Storie: I wondered, because I wondered where you came up with the analogy; I thought your analogy was quite good, that FOS turned out to be the motivator to get the parties together. Do you have any sense that final offer selection is anti-business?

Ms. Fletcher: No, I do not feel that it would be anti-business. I think that in many ways, thinking again of my own experience, I believe final offer selection could save a lot of money in negotiating. Right from the beginning knowing that either side can do this, they are going to sit down, they are going to listen to each other and there is going to be a lot less bringing people in from out of town and so forth and so on. I cannot see it as being anti-business at all, personally, no I do not.

Mr. Storie: It has been said by some that final offer selection is unfair to organized labour. Is there any sense, can you understand that comment?

Ms. Fletcher: Unfair to organized labour. I have read material on it. It is not unfair to organized labour, when organized labour gets to vote before they go to final offer selection. If just certain people could decide to do that sure it could be unfair, but not when we all get to vote before we offer that. Of course not.

Mr. Storie: What you are saying is, that the opposite would be true, that we often hear from, in fact, the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) maintains that final offer selection is just supported by big union bosses. What you are saying is that final offer selection ensures that the bargaining committee and the membership are on side.

Ms. Fletcher: I would like to also talk about that a little bit personally, because this is the first time I have ever been to committee like this. Well, I went to smaller committees on women's issues, and the reason I did it was my own, I read the material, I did not take material that anyone provided for me just to enhance myself because I really thought the experience that I had could really, really be why people could get the impression that there has to be this conflict between your employer, your management and yourself. I do not think that is necessarily inherent. Did I answer your question?

Mr. Rose: I have just one brief question. Ms. Fletcher, we will let you get on the road there. I know that it is snowy, and I have been in the area quite a bit lately and it is a dangerous road.

You have talked on confrontation. Yesterday, Mr. Smith of Westfair was very insistent on a point that I had really a tough time squaring with. Not because I disagreed with it, but I had a hard time thinking it through. He said that the right to strike or lock out by

the company and the union—he considered this, if I heard it him correctly, a real necessary tool during negotiations to bring the parties together in reality, similar to what you suggest that FOS does. How do you square with that? I guess what I am really asking you, do you think that the right to either lock out or strike does speed up negotiations? Is it a necessary tool? I guess that is what I am really asking.

Ms. Fletcher: My feeling about that would be that traditionally in the labour movement it has gotten to the point that those particular tools have been used. Strike has been used by the labour movement, usually in response to a management position. I guess the thing is that has been used for quite a while, and both sides may say, well, that is what we finally had to go to. But at what cost, if there could be an alternative that would not have such a tremendous cost? As I said, an incentive—that was the word, I do not know if I said that before—to come together and negotiate reasonably. Final offer selection is a terrific incentive.

Mr. Plohman: Would you agree that strikes and lockouts are confrontationist in nature and that FOS is a non-confrontationist alternative?

Ms. Fletcher: I agree with that statement. I do agree with that.

Mr. Plohman: That is all.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any further questions? If not, thank you for coming forward with your presentation this morning, Ms. Fletcher.

Ms. Fletcher: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Our next presenter is No. 28 on your list—Ms. Kathy Kraychuk. Is she here? Please proceed, Ms. Kraychuk.

Ms. Kathy Kraychuk (Private Citizen): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Honourable Members. I do not have any written notes. I come as a union person, a strong union person because of a strike I was involved in in 1987. What I come to share with you is probably mostly emotion, a lot of anger, a lot of cynicism. I have been here through some of the hearings. I am speaking against the repeal of final offer selection. As a person who went through a strike, I do believe we need protection, and right now the only protection we have is final offer selection, be it as little as it is.

I became interested in final offer selection in November, December of 1988 when I heard the leader of the Liberal Party say that this legislation was unfair to organized labour. That started me thinking, why would we get something in that was unfair to organized labour? I did a little bit of research on it, and I have come to the conclusion that for someone to make a statement like that would mean that it is fair to go on strike, that it is fair for people to be ridiculed, that it is fair for working people to have their finances stripped, to have relations within families, within friendships, completely severed in a lot of cases. That made me very angry.

As part of the 1987 strike, we walked for 126, 127 days. It was the most difficult period of my life. It was also the best learning period of my life. I was not what I would call a strong union person before this happened. If anything, I am more of a union person now than ever. Every day as things happen and I read the propaganda in the paper, as one of the speakers mentioned earlier, I get angrier and angrier, and it makes me more determined to make my life as a working person, which I will be the rest of my life because I choose to be. It makes me want to change that attitude, change the attitude in Government I see, unfortunately, the Liberal Party is saying that they support the working people. I do not see that. I may be naive. I do not know much about politics, but from what I have read I do not see any support. If you did support us, you would not be siding with the Government to get rid of this legislation.

When I was on strike in 1987, I was assaulted by an older gentleman who—what he did was he butted out his cigarette on my neck. You did not hear about that because it was not important. I am a labour person, I am a dime a dozen. With the GST I will be 17 cents a dozen, big deal. But you did not hear about things like that; you heard about the inside workers who got their french fries stamped out with a cigarette butt. That was more important than a human body being desecrated, for what I call it.

I am not a violent person. I did not go into the strike to be a violent person, but I had no choice. We were told, actually, before the strike happened, in no uncertain terms, if you do not go on strike you are going to be locked out. What is your decision, how do you stand? Can we count on you to walk in the doors tomorrow? We had no choice. If we would have had final offer selection, you bet we would have taken it at the first window, because nobody wanted to go on strike. You know, from the statistics from previous speakers, the majority of the people that work in these stores are women, and a lot of them are single women, single parents. They could not afford that, they knew that.

* (1210)

But we had no choice. We had to protect our jobs, as menial as they may sound to other people. They are important to us. We, for the most part, like what we do. The strike has not ended. I work in an Econo-Mart store, which are very different from the SuperValu stores. We have no guarantee of 24 hours a week. I transferred into a department—just to give you the mentality of the company, I have sort of been persecuted ever since we went back, because I was a more active member in our store, and just recently I transferred into the produce department. I am a woman in an untouched field, which really ticked them off.

I had to grieve them to get that job, and when I got that job—up front I was getting 24 to 30 hours a week—they have put me down to 12 hours a week. Now, I am the senior person in that department. They have been told, in no uncertain terms does Kathy Kraychuk get more than 12 hours a week. I have no protection from that other than the fact that I can stand on my own two feet and fight for that and hope to hell that

in the future everything is going to get better, and maybe things will get back to normal. But this is two years later. I mean the company does not want to negotiate and I can guarantee you, if we do not have final offer selection in our next contract, we are going to be out on the picket line in another two or three years from now, and we will not have a choice then either.

The president of the Chamber of Commerce said there is a dark cloud lingering over Manitoba. I tend to agree with him, but I agreed that dark cloud lingers over specific houses, and it is the middle class, the low income, the single parents, the seniors. We do not have very much voice anymore, and thank God for opportunities like this to maybe make you change your mind. Maybe we can do something, and maybe get a little bit of self-respect for ourselves, because I tell you, being on strike, you lose a lot of that, and it takes you a long time to get it back. After 127 days of hearing everybody—the media, the TV, friends, neighbours—tell you that you are schmucks, you do not know what you are doing, you are going after money—which we were not, but people did not know that then—you begin to believe it after awhile. It is very hard to keep your perspective.

The business people, there has been what, five or six people here speaking on the repeal of FOS and free collective bargaining? Westfair has no idea what that means. Absolutely no idea. If they did, they went into this strike months before, knowing they were going to be the first, they were going to break a union. They were going to be the first of a string of people to bring down the unions. Now you cannot tell me that they went in to free collective bargaining in good faith. They did not.

Given the opportunity, they will do the same thing to us again. I will be there fighting. I will not like it, but I will be there. I will be here fighting against any other thing that tampers with any small labour legislation that we have. I mean, you have 107 speakers. You have had five or six speaking toward the business end of it. That means what, 101, 102 people speaking for final offer selection. It seems to me that if you were put here to listen to the people that put you sitting in your seats, you would know what the decision is. There is no decision. The working people want final offer selection.

The reason why the business community does not like it is because they do not have the upper hand any longer. It is still no, as far as I am concerned, bolstered in our favour to what it should be. But it is protection. I would like protection from the next guy that tries to assault me on my next picket line. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any questions? Mr. Storie.

Mr. Storie: Ms. Kraychuk, thank you for appearing before the committee and presenting your views. You mentioned that you had not been particularly active in the past until you were involved in this strike. I wonder if you could share with us the attitude of some of your colleagues. Is final offer selection being discussed now amongst your colleagues at your place of work?

Ms. Kraychuk: Yes, it is. Not by all the people. As you know, Westfair believes in hiring and hiring, and a lot

of the new people do not know what has happened in the past. They knew we were on strike, but like many people who have not been on strike, you do not know, unless you are there, what it is actually all about. It was part of the past.

The people who have been involved in the strike are talking about final offer selection. More so, we are talking about what if it is taken away? What are our chances next time? We went 126, 127 days. The reason we settled is because the union settled, because we had gone long enough. What is going to happen next time, given the fact that they have hired 500 or 600 people since that time?

Mr. Storie: We are left with the clear impression that in this case Westfair was intent on putting you out to strike. Obviously there had some discussions. Are you concerned that final offer selection is a sort of a take-it-or-leave-it proposition, that both parties put their final offer out and one wins and one loses?

Ms. Kraychuk: Am I concerned? Certainly. I do not know many people who could honestly say they are not. In any war, and this was a war, there is a winner and a loser. If final offer selection means that you go back to work or you do not strike at all—I mean, you may have to take your lumps for three years if they decide to take the management's point of view. But you have not had to sacrifice a lot for it. Given the circumstances that final offer selection means that both parties have to put their most reasonable offer on the table, get the garbage out of the way—120 days it was garbage in the Westfair strike. You know, it was not until the last few days that nickel-diming started happening. If it can help that, then—yes.

Mr. Storie: Maybe you could just share with us whether you feel if final offer selection had been used, if it had not dragged on for those 125 days, the animosity that still exists at your workplace and perhaps other SuperValu stores—would there still have been animosity, or is final offer selection likely to reduce that?

Ms. Kraychuk: No, I believe that, if we had been able to use final offer selection, there would not have been the animosity. I worked for the company in 1973. I worked there for eight and a half years and I took a five-year leave of absence. I can tell you when I came back to work in 1986 with the same company, I could not believe that the attitudes had changed.

When I was younger and I worked with the company, people were on a pretty even keel, management and staff, and you could go and talk to your manager if you had a problem. Or if the supervisors came in the store, you could look them face to face and say, hi, how are you? They would respond. The attitude now, the scale is like this. I mean, there is management and that is it. We are just the people on the floor that do whatever we do and take home lots of money, which really ticks them off because it hits them in their little billion-dollar profit books. I do not know.

I really think final offer selection would have helped that animosity. It would not have helped it a whole heck

of a lot because of the company we are dealing with, but it would have helped it as far as the inside workers and outsider workers. There is a division; there still is. It is not as great as it was, but that would not have been there, and that is important.

Mr. Storie: You mentioned that five people had been here, sort of representing the business point of view. Certainly, although I was not here for all of them, I have not been convinced that really any of those presenters have been dealing with anything but the myths that they themselves have created about what final offer selection does and how dangerous labour legislation that supports working people is to the province.

I am wondering if you have heard anything, if you have heard any substantive argument to refute the suggestion that somehow this legislation is unfair to organized labour. Has anyone given you anything concrete that would allow you to say, yes, maybe it is?

* (1220)

Ms. Kraychuk: No, I can honestly say I have not. What I gathered from talking to the people who were presenting on behalf of the business, they are scared for some reason and they have so much protection. They have so much more money than we do, than the unions. They have so much more power than we do, and they are afraid that somebody is going to chip away and somebody else is going to come along and chip away at that and chip away some more, and that is not going to happen. We are not going to rise up and revolt. All we want is what is fair for us. I do not think that is asking too much as working people.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Emberley, who presented before you, I think raised a very interesting point about the amount of money that is spent by companies and by the Chambers of Commerce and so forth, in promoting a view that somehow Manitoba has an anti-business climate or anti-business labour legislation. Does it concern you that, for example, there are no media here today to listen to the presentations of people who this legislation actually protects?

Ms. Kraychuk: It concerns me. It concerned me from the first day. The first day I saw one media person here, sitting on the right-hand side. I have been following the papers every day. I think I have found two articles on final offer selection; that says a lot. It does not surprise me, but it says a lot. It confirms my opinion of the media, which I found out during the Westfair strike is very slanted, in favour of the business community.

Yes, it does bother me. All the people who are presenting here basically for the most part are people that work day to day, hopefully, part-time, but it has been very hard for a lot of people to come here and speak to people such as yourselves. I think for that they deserve recognition, even if it is a little tiny column in the editorials or somebody saying, bravo, you people are trying to do something. We are trying to do something in our small way. It does bother me, because we have a story to tell, too. There are always two sides

to every story, but you always get the business side before the labour's side.

Mr. Storie: One final question. I guess there are still some in this Legislature, two Parties in particular, who seem anxious to see final offer selection repealed. We hope there will be some changing of views because, frankly, people like yourself who present to this committee are having an impact. We obviously supported final offer selection, but I have to believe the stories that are being told here are so dramatic, so touching that people cannot be not unimpressed.

What if the worst happens, however, and we lose final offer selection? What are you going to do?

Ms. Kraychuk: Oh, God, that is a tough one. Sorry. What am I going to do? I am going to be watching very closely. I am going to be looking for the next piece of legislation that will give us a little leverage, not a lot, just a little. I am going to be praying with both fingers crossed that when our next contract comes up, all the management in SuperValu have been changed and they have reasonable people in there.

Mr. Storie: Maybe you can provide some advice to the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) and myself and perhaps others. What do you think we should be doing as legislators, or what should the average person be doing to make sure we continue to improve legislation in support of working people? What can we do? What should we be doing?

Ms. Kraychuk: I do not really know if you want my honest opinion on that. I do not think final offer selection is enough. In my opinion I would go for stronger legislation, but I know you have to start to walk before you can run. In effect, final offer selection is one of those steps. Anti-scab would be terrific, it would be great. Chances are we are never going to see that, but we do have final offer selection and we have to keep that. We have to maintain that.

We are dealing with a company—and not all companies, I realize, are like SuperValu, but there are companies that are totally motivated, from what I can see, by greed, by the almighty buck. That is okay to a point, but when you get to be a billion-dollar corporation, those bucks are really not all that important. Is it not better just to keep the people you have and keep the quality you have? I would like to keep final offer selection. I do not want any amendment to it. I want the five-year sunset clause. I think that would be fair. I think within that time, there would be a lot more data on whether it is working or not. It is fairly new.

It is funny the NDP was criticized for bringing it in so quickly when we were on strike. I cannot help but see that the Conservatives are just as happy to get it out as quickly as they can. You know, two wrongs do not make a right, or vice versa. We need final offer selection. I do not think the business community in Manitoba is going to suffer because of it. Manitoba is a good place to be; I truly believe that. There is going to be people wanting to come in here and invest.

Mr. Rose: I did have a question, but it has since been answered. I would like to take this opportunity now to sincerely thank Ms. Kraychuk for her presentation. It was very informative. We indeed listened, and thanks again.

Mr. Plohman: Yes, I want to thank you also for your presentation from the heart. I would like to be able to tell you that I am going to offer you support every time I come into the store, but I will not come into the store, so I will not be able to do that. I have only been in there about once or twice in the last couple of years, and I do not think I will go again, after what I am hearing here.

Why do you think the Government wants to remove FOS?

Ms. Kraychuk: Just from what I said earlier, I do not know a heck of a lot about politics. I am learning quickly though, so hold onto your seats, folks.

I think it is because the business no longer has the upper hand. Not that they have lost it because final offer selection can be invoked by either party, but the fact that labour is the one that votes on it. That really ticks them off, that we could have a say in something, that they no longer can say to us, we do not want to pay you that money anymore. We do not want to give you a guarantee of hours. Well, I make \$14-\$15 an hour. I work 12 hours a week. That is not a heck of a lot of money. Now, if I were working 24, 30 hours, that is a good amount of money, I would not be complaining, but we do not have those guarantees.

Mr. Plohman: You think it is at least a politically symbolic issue for business and for the Conservatives?

Ms. Kraychuk: I believe so, from—

Mr. Plohman: More than substance, in terms of taking away the business?

Ms. Kraychuk: Yes, from what I gather, from any knowledge I have gained through this last election and through the Conservatives, the leaders, yes, to me a lot of everything that happens is because of the business community. Not many other people have much influence. The seniors do not; the low income do not; the people who need day cares do not. I mean, who speaks for us? When does the time come where you people start thinking that we need things too? I mean, we are just as important. Without all the blue collar workers around, you have no businesses. I know, granted that is never, ever going to happen, but think about it. Somebody has to start speaking up for the little people.

Mr. Plohman: Thank you, Ms. Kraychuk.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Chairman, pardon me, but the question of hours came up again. This sort of intrigues me a little bit. I knew there was rather scanty hours with some of the people, but I did not realize that they were quite as bad as you have indicated. We have heard that there were 24 hour plateaus, 21, 18 and even less. My question is quite simple. To your knowledge, is this

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similar to the contract with Safeway, which is Westfair's principal competitor? It just bugs me, and I would like to know that if you have the information.

Ms. Kraychuk: I do not believe so. I believe that Safeway, to my knowledge, in the last couple of contracts have bargained in good faith, if there is such a thing. They seem to be more reasonable with their employees.

The big issue is a guarantee of hours. Given the circumstances, given the fact we have a GST hitting us, given the fact every time that the new budgets come out, who do they hit? The middle income people or the poverty people, the people that need the money the most. A guarantee of hours is very important. It does not matter how much you make. What depends

on it, is your hours to make that money, whether it is \$7 or \$14 an hour.

Mr. Chairman: If there are no further questions, thank you for your presentation this morning, Ms. Kraychuk.

Ms. Kraychuk: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: The hour being 12:30 p.m., just prior to rising for the morning, I would like to remind committee Members and members of the public that the committee will also be meeting this afternoon at 2 p.m.

Committee rise.

COMMITTEE ROSE AT: 12:31 p.m.