

Labour Conditions

the government in terms of the advice it receives, but for the labour movement in terms of their input into many of the decisions that are made by these boards. In any event, if they should review their position with respect to these boards and withdraw, obviously we will have to inherit the misfortunes that flow on all sides from such a development.

With respect to the Canada Labour Relations Council I think it should be made clear that this is not a government agency or board but a truly tri-partite council in every respect. If one element withdraws, the whole thing collapses. We have a one third interest in it in terms of participation. It is not management, it is not labour. Each one is entitled to operate in it to a certain extent, so that if labour or management should withdraw they are withdrawing from their own agency. They are self-destructing their own mechanism to try to come up with some workable solutions. That would be self-defeating.

I might add here that this board is doing some very useful work indeed. It is involved in the whole area of broad based bargaining as a useful way to diminish work stoppages, both legal and illegal, in this country, and to inject some rationality into the collective bargaining system when we have been faced with some serious figures on a relative international basis of man years lost due to strikes.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): I regret to interrupt the minister but the time allotted to him has expired.

Is there unanimous consent to allow the minister to continue?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Peters: He has my consent if he would give some consideration to speaking for a few minutes on the subject, which is the appeal procedure.

Mr. Nystrom: Yes, he should speak on the subject.

Some hon. Members: Read the motion.

Mr. Broadbent: Would the minister permit a question? I have been listening with great care to what he had to say. I might have missed the point, but did he acknowledge, and if he did not, does he disagree with the substance of my argument that as they exist now the appeal procedures are undemocratic, and if he does, was he saying earlier that while the government may be considering changing the procedures it intends to amend them along the line that would be regarded as democratic?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): I did not say that, Mr. Speaker. What I did say was that when we envisaged this legislation, we felt it was reasonable. I still feel it is reasonable. To my way of thinking, in terms of full representations before the Anti-Inflation Board, the board renders an interpretation with respect to an agreement. If it is not adhered to it goes to the administrator, admittedly through the board, for a decision by the administrator.

If the hon. member and others claim that there is an element of inequity in an appeal going in the second stage to the administrator and beyond, I think I might say that we are open to persuasion and we are prepared to consider

[Mr. Munro (Hamilton East).]

the matter. I think that is the position clearly stated in answer to the hon. member.

Mr. Orlikow: Is there any appeal to the courts?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): The leader of the NDP in his motion states that this is a specific and important matter requiring urgent consideration, namely, "the revelation today of the announced intention by the executive of the CLC representing almost 2 million Canadian workers to withdraw..." Today the hon. member used the word consider, his motion says "intention to withdraw", and the press release from CLC says "review" its position with respect to all boards. So I think we should be very precise, when we talk about a serious matter of this kind, not to inflame the situation and try to create an atmosphere of confrontation, which could be unfortunate for everyone. We all have a responsibility to avoid that.

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I should say that I appreciate the opportunity hon. members have given me to exceed my time limit, and in conclusion I should like to indicate just two other measures which are being looked into by the Canada Labour Relations Council which would provide some really tangible benefit for Canadians generally and for members of the labour movement. We talk about rationalization of bargaining units or broader based bargaining. I think it is essential and in the best interests of the labour movement, its membership and the Canadian people, that this be studied.

An hon. Member: Get off the pot.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Perhaps the hon. member who is again interrupting does not even speak to union membership, let alone the leadership, or he would be aware of that fact.

Another area which has been seriously considered by the Canada Labour Relations Council—and in which labour has been one of the most profound advocates—is the area of trying to develop a central agency for statistical gathering and analysis which would not have a bias, or be perceived as having a bias by either labour or management. It would in fact be responsible to this tripartite council itself rather than to a government agency. At least this would set some reasonable parameters within which collective bargaining could take place at a time perhaps when these controls are finished.

People keep asking why should labour or management not sit on the Canada Labour Relations Council and why should they stand by when we are interfering—not denying, but interfering—with the collective bargaining system. It seems to me that it is in the interest of all of us to be assured that, when the control period is over, the collective bargaining system as such will be a better system so it is not so vulnerable to the attacks which are launched on it daily, to the detriment of labour and its leadership as well as of the Canadian people. This is another area which is being studied very seriously by this council now.

The third area in which labour is fully participating for the benefit of workers on this council is the examination of