its own Public Service Staff Relations Act. Yet the Government would like us to buy Bill C-45 when, indeed, we know that the employees are not happy with the process.

Why are they not happy? I will explain why. Bill C-45 does not allow the employees of the House the right to strike. It is a right which they would enjoy under the Canada Labour Code. Recent Canada Labour Relations Board rulings have indicated that Hill employees are governed by the Canada Labour Code and that they can be represented by certified bargaining units. This is the reason employees on the Hill want to be covered under the Canada Labour Code. They think that the deal they will get through that arrangement is better than the deal they will get through the Public Service Staff Relations Act. If that is the position they hold, then one must say: "Fine. Let us sit down and find common ground".

The unions on the Hill have said that they will forgo their right to strike because they understand what are essential services. God knows they are devoted and that they have been good to us. However, they want the assurance, as do all public servants, that binding arbitration procedures will be changed and not maintained as they exist in their present form. That is the key to the whole issue. The employees have said: "We will not strike, but you must give us a deal. We will forfeit our right to strike in exchange for an agreement on arbitration procedures and matters which are not covered in the present legislation". I would add that they are not covered in the Public Service Staff Relations Act either.

NABET and PSAC object, in particular, to Clauses 5(3) and 55(2). Clause 5(3) states:

> Nothing in this Part shall be construed so as to affect the right or authority of an employer to determine the organization of the employer and to assign duties and classify positions of employment.

I will now read into the record Clause 55(2) since it is important. It states:

> No arbitral award shall deal with the standards, procedures or processes governing the appointment, appraisal, promotion, demotion, transfer, lay-off or release of employees, or with any term or condition of employment of employees that was not a subject of negotiation between the parties during the period before arbitration was requested in respect thereof.

In the name of all of us here in Parliament how can the Government proceed with a Bill that does not make classification standards a negotiable matter? Why do we not place that on the table? That is what the Government promised during the election campaign. It is something with which I am in accord. I do not think that members of the New Democratic Party would object to it. Why not give some of these matters serious thought?

I recall that the Treasury Board, in negotiating several contracts this year, tried to give its employees a reasonable approach in regard to lay-off. We are now into an era of compression of the human resources of the Government of Canada. Therefore, the Government must be very sensitive and try to answer those justifiable and deeply felt feelings of people who may be threatened in their jobs and in their careers. They want to be able to negotiate some form of job security. They want to be able to negotiate job classification because job classification means pay. That is the essential truth. Bill C-45 will not do the two most important things the Government promised to do, and that is, to offer a multilateral process of negotiation and to give the employees a better deal than they have had up until now by including certain things in law such as classification, layoff, promotion, demotion, transfer, release and other standards which affect the wellbeing of employees.

• (1540)

When the average person in my riding thinks of the House of Commons and its essential role, he or she does not understand why Parliament has taken so long to come to grips with the issue of employer-employee relations. Indeed, for some 20 years we have had a rather good employer-employee relations law for the Public Service, yet we fail as parliamentarians to look after the close to 3,000 employees of this place who are justifiably requesting that they be included in some form of employer-employee relations agreement.

I heard the Conservative Member for Nepean—Carleton (Mr. Tupper) on the radio the other day, and I will paraphrase what he said. He said that Bill C-45 is landmark labour legislation which provides Hill workers with important rights including health and safety rights. That is a mistake if anything because, as workers covered by the Canada Labour Code, Hill employees already enjoy the health and safety rights and privileges which came into force under Bill C-24. To say that Bill C-45 is landmark labour legislation is, I think, to misinform Canadians and the Ottawa community. As a matter of fact, Hill employees are covered by Bill C-24 and we know that because we debated it.

The workers on the Hill have asked for a six-month delay. They have asked for meaningful negotiations. I believe they are in possession of a decision on the Canada Labour Code which makes them confident that they will now be able to come forward with an meaningful employer-employee relations formula.

I hope the House will understand that, in the interests of our own employees, we could vote for the motion of the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps) and support a one-month hoist in order to have the Government understand that it must get on with the negotiations with employees and come forward with a compromise solution if needed, and that it must do it soon and do it in the interests of Canadians and the employees on the Hill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Are questions or comments? If there are no questions or comments, is the House ready for the question?

Mr. Orlikow: No.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak against this Bill, which I consider to be a real disgrace to Members of Parliament and certainly to the Government. It does not deal with the real and urgent need