

I do not think that that is such an unreasonable request. It is not as if we were asking for a monstrous pay increase. It is not as if we were asking for all sorts of outrageous concessions. What we are asking for is time, which does not cost anybody anything; all it costs is some goodwill. If we do not have that goodwill with our own employees how are we ever going to send a message to the workers of Canada that we are going to have it with any of them across this country. That is the important issue. There is a wider issue than simply the rights of the employees on the Hill, as important as they are. There are messages going out every day from Governments to workers across this country, and I think the message that this Parliament should send is that we want to give time so that people can sit down at the table and work out a reasonable arrangement.

**Mr. Rodriguez:** Mr. Speaker, I heard the Hon. Member's colleague from Papineau yesterday make a fine speech about the rights of workers on the Hill to have collective bargaining. I heard a fine speech from the Hon. Member today. Both of these Members have been in the previous Government Cabinet. From 1968 they had some 16-odd years to express this great concern which they now express in Opposition about being sensitive to the rights and the needs of our employees on the Hill. Mr. Lloyd Francis revealed that conditions on the Hill, according to him, were replete with nepotism and sexual harassment. The question I want to ask this Hon. Member is what is on his mind, is it because he is now in the Opposition or is it really a conversion on the way to Damascus that suddenly made him realize what he could not do in the Government he is now trying to get from the Opposition benches?

**Mr. Rompkey:** Mr. Speaker, I simply want to say to my colleague, the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) that I do not think he serves the union well by repeating history. The enemy is over there. The NDP wants to take unto itself the mantle of self-righteousness in which it girds itself historically over the years to show that only they care and those of us who accept responsibility in Government are somehow less righteous, less caring, less sensitive to the needs of workers across this country. That is the historical position of the NDP. The people we are talking about today are going to dismiss that as trite and irrelevant. If the Hon. Member wanted to be helpful to the people that he purports to support he would stop debating history, he would stop fighting the Opposition, and he would start attacking the people who are actually dealing with this legislation. That is my answer to him.

• (1230)

**Ms. Copps:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask another question of the Member for Grand Falls—White Bay—Labrador. This week there were revelations about one of his colleagues, the Member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) and his allegations against his own Government that it was unfair and unjust and, in fact, discriminatory in its hiring policies

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with respect to regional wage rates across Canada. He stated this in a letter to a constituent. These regional wage rates do not reflect equality across Canada. We see great difficulties in areas like Newfoundland where wage rates have been negotiated with the existence of collective bargaining. How much worse must it be for people currently working on the Hill in the House of Commons who do not even have the instrument or the tool of collective bargaining with which to redress these types of injustices? If the Government's own Minister of Justice has stated that it is unjust and discriminatory to impose the kind of wage rates that his Government has imposed upon the people of Newfoundland, woe betide those on the Hill who have no rights to collective bargaining and are at the mercy of the Government and the mercy of the Ministers with respect to wage rates. I would like to ask him about that. I would also like to ask him whether he feels the Government's refusal to accept the hoist amendment, which just calls for a 30-day delay, is indicative of their willingness or their desire to press forward with legislation which does not give the employees the protection they should be getting. Does the Hon. Member feel that it indicates a belief on the part of the Government that they want to get the most spineless and least effective legislation through as quickly as possible so they will not be put in a position where they have to give employee rights? This was clearly demonstrated by the fact that the Government of Canada took the Canadian Labour Relations Board to court on their own decision. The CLRB ruled in favour of the workers. The Government could have allowed that decision to stand, but they chose to appeal it and will probably continue to appeal it to the highest courts of the land. It does not seem to me that this is a Government interested in the rights of the workers on the Hill. It seems to me that it is a Government interested in introducing the weakest possible piece of legislation so they can continue to run things in the kind of atmosphere of nepotism and fear which the Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) cited in his previous question.

**Mr. Rompkey:** I am glad my colleague has brought up that issue, as I think it is apropos. The Hon. Member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) is a very straightforward man, which sometimes gets one in trouble when one is a politician. However, he says what he thinks and what he believes. He is right when he says that there is discrimination in pay rates. He is only saying what the people who elected him want him to say in the House. People in certain areas of the country make less than people in other areas of the country, which is clearly discrimination in terms of wage rates. That situation must be addressed. The Hon. Member for St. John's West supports that view and I agree with him. He is right to support it because he is pointing to an inequity and saying what should be changed. At least the people he is talking about have the right to negotiate because they are in a union that has some bargaining rights and can raise that particular issue. We are asking that employees on the Hill be given those same rights.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The period for questions and comments is over. Resuming debate.