

*Government Orders*

I am not going to go further with the matter. I would ask hon. members when they are referring to each other to always try to keep the debate on the subject matter and try not to personalize it because these things do wound on both sides of the House.

[*Translation*]

In particular, I would like to comment on the proposed changes that would make parental leave more flexible, thus helping parents balance work and family responsibilities. As with the changes made to the Unemployment Insurance Act in 1990, parents can have continuous leave for the year following the birth or adoption of a child.

In particular, also, the changes concerning maternity-related reassignments are in line with women's right to stay at work during pregnancy. Employers must make all reasonable arrangements to modify the tasks of a pregnant or nursing employee or to reassign her.

[*English*]

These are some of the provisions we certainly support in this bill. Others clarifying the relationship of minimum standards within the Canada Labour Code to other negotiated conditions in contracts between workers and their employers and provisions relating to the obligations of the employer to an employee who becomes disabled or ill as a result of the work situation, as I said, are progressive steps which we applaud.

Regrettably the drop of arsenic the government cannot seem to resist putting into a good bill at the last minute gives us substantial concerns. That bit of poison is in fact a substantial provision of great concern to workers. I am going to address it particularly in the context of Public Service employees because this bill as well as amending the Canada Labour Code includes amendments to the Public Service Staff Relations Act.

The provision to which I am referring and to which others who have spoken on this bill referred is the one that says where negotiations are not going well the employer can ask the Minister of Labour to refer an employer's offer to a vote of the employees.

I want to put this provision in the context of good management-labour relations. When two parties sit down to negotiate it is essential to maintain the balance of power between the two. There has to be a comparability of the rights of each in the process. Certainly in committee we want to look at how that balance of power is affected by giving an employer the right to come to the government and ask for a directed vote on the employer's offer. It is important not to put anything into the negotiating process that will discourage negotiations, that will discourage the parties from coming to a mutual agreement, a negotiated contract.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[*English*]

**CANADA LABOUR CODE****MEASURE TO AMEND**

The House resumed from Tuesday, February 23, consideration of the motion of Mr. Danis that Bill C-101, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Public Service Staff Relations Act, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee in the Human Resources envelope.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak again on Bill C-101 so that I can continue the comments I made on Tuesday, February 23. I said at the beginning of my remarks that Bill C-101 is a good example of the government's malicious tendency to present bills that combine poison and honey.

[*English*]

A number of provisions in this bill, changes to the Canada Labour Code which establish improved minimum conditions of work are certainly progressive. They represent a great step forward, reached after many, many months of negotiation among the government, employers and employees representatives.

Without similar consultation the government has chosen as well to include provisions in this bill that have no acceptance among its employees who are affected by this bill or among other labour relations. To the best of our knowledge they have not been discussed with anybody.

• (1545)

Let us talk about some of the provisions we support because they are substantial and they are to the benefit of employees.