

It is our understanding that Bill C-34 will be before a parliamentary committee in the near future and FETCO members in the airlines, trucking, marine, longshoring, rail and communications sectors would all like to be heard before the committee concerning the principles of Bill C-34. It would be appreciated if you would advise us with whom to communicate on this issue.

I hope we will hear these groups as they have requested and in the manner they have requested, and I will certainly be recommending that to the committee. The next telegram comes from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, which says:

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business is extremely concerned about reports that you plan to pass the proposed amendments to the Canada Labour Code without referring them to a parliamentary committee for public input. Given the devastating implications for job creation and productivity contained in several of the measures, business representatives and other concerned citizens must be given the opportunity to comment on these measures. After all, the proposed amendments were only tabled on May 15th.

We spoke of the late timing and tabling of this Bill in an earlier debate. The telegram continues:

The debacle of the November 1981 Budget illustrates the problems created by proceeding with legislation without adequate public input. Your press release announcing the proposed amendments, describes the proposals as "the culmination of extensive consultation", but we were never consulted.

I would appreciate your undertaking that these serious measures will receive the usual careful parliamentary committee review.

It is signed by Jim Bennett, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs, Canadian Federation of Independent Business. I want to hear his views, Mr. Speaker, because he is concerned that there are devastating implications for job creation and productivity. I know the workers of Canada want job creation; they want to increase productivity because they recognize the benefits which flow to society as a whole. I know that they want these things. If there are devastating implications, as is indicated here, I hope they will in fact be heard so we could make our own judgment as to these devastating implications.

● (1150)

The next telegram comes from R. M. MacIntosh, President of the Canadian Bankers' Association. The telex states:

—the chartered banks consider Bill C-34 such a major piece of legislation that it is imperative that employer and employee groups be given every opportunity to comment at the committee stage.

As a major employer of over 150,000 Canadians, vitally concerned with the implications of this Bill, the chartered banks seek your assurance that full consideration will be given to our request to present a brief and to others wishing to appear before the committee to express their views.

I have another telegram from Roy A. Phillips, President of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. It states:

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association has reviewed and analyzed Bill C-34, an Act to amend the Canada labour Code. Because the Bill proposes substantive amendments to the code, which will have significant implications for private and quasi public employers, it should be subject to thorough assessment and analysis by members of Parliament and by interested and affected parties, before passage. Therefore, CMA urges that following second reading Bill C-34 be referred to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration for detailed study. Interested organizations should be invited to appear. CMA requests the opportunity to present our views to the committee regarding the following matters:

Canada Labour Code

- The cost, extent, application and feasibility of proposed new labour standards.
- The extension of compulsory arrangements under occupational health and safety and the expanded right to refuse dangerous work.
- Impact on collective bargaining and individual rights, and ways in which stability could be improved.

It is imperative that these groups be heard, whether it is labour or various sectors of the business community. For that reason I have read all of the telegrams that I have received into the record. I know that the Minister has received many more. I read them into the record to emphasize that it is important that we get an input from the public.

On that basis, I am hopeful that these measures will pass second reading stage today so that we may proceed to the committee stage. Hopefully we will hear their true concerns about these measures at committee stage and that, time permitting, this legislation can come back to the House of Commons for a final decision.

I and my Party look forward to these measures going to the committee. We look forward to hearing the representations of all interested parties and to hearing their views on improving this legislation. As far as we are concerned, we are willing to meet as often and as long as necessary to complete such hearings. I look forward to discussing with the chairman how these matters may be dealt with.

I have further considerable information on various aspects of this Bill that I was going to put on the record. I have already talked about youth unemployment to some degree. In addition, there are the ramifications of technological change. The Conservative Party has not simply talked about these major concerns but has studied these concerns as a result of the establishment of a task force which investigated and reported concrete steps that the House should be taking in recognition of technological change and the necessity of retraining. My colleague from Calgary led that task force. He will report on the implications of technological change and what must be done to meet those changes. This is an important aspect of this legislation that must be discussed in committee. I will leave it to my colleague to discuss the ramifications of these technological changes.

Another extremely important aspect of this legislation concerns women's issues in the workplace. The Canada Labour Code is of great concern to the women of this country who are often the first victims of cut-backs. Women are presently a great resource in the Canadian workplace. As our population ages we will increasingly need that resource in the workplace. Therefore, retraining and working conditions for women is an important issue not only to women but to the entire nation. It is extremely significant to recognize their input and to give them special consideration and concern.

My colleague, the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald), who has been a strong advocate, a strong leader and a strong voice in understanding and expressing these concerns, will demonstrate that care today. She will demonstrate the importance of women in the workplace and describe their great potential. We must recognize the potential of all our workers, be they young workers who face no hope