

*Manpower and Immigration Council*

existence, on what it is doing and what sort of policies it is advising the minister to follow. In short, Mr. Speaker, I intend to see that we follow the orthodox practice in establishing a creature of parliament, namely, of retaining some control over that creation. This, to me, is a fatal weakness in the bill as it now stands. According to past and present practice, bodies such as this council which are set up in this way pass from our jurisdiction forever. Only indirectly would we be able to assess its work on the basis of whatever the minister himself chose to report to us.

In my remarks at the resolution stage yesterday I wondered whether the minister had cured some of the previous defects in operation and was bringing in legislation that could properly stand the scrutiny of parliament or whether it was one of those hit or miss efforts that would have to be endlessly corrected before the council could become viable. Alas, Mr. Speaker, my fears are realized. The bill does contain this very glaring omission, one that I think it is the duty and responsibility of each member of parliament to correct. Otherwise we whittle away large chunks of our authority, fail to represent our electorate properly and lose control over government and government bodies.

● (3:30 p.m.)

We tend to leave more and more power to be exercised according to the discretion of ministers and ministerial advisers and less in our own hands. This is a weakness. At the appropriate time I hope to persuade the minister and the house that it is a weakness that must be corrected. Accordingly, to avoid the surprise of a last minute amendment I give notice that I intend to move an amendment at the end of the clause by clause consideration. In this regard I have in mind that part of the Economic Council of Canada Act which requires that body to lay its reports before parliament. The change to be made in this bill, in the clause to which I have reference, will strike out the word "economic" and substitute therefor the words "manpower and immigration". I have said this to give the minister and his advisers information about the type of amendment I shall be moving.

No small step is being taken through this measure. The minister tried to make it appear in his brief intervention that it was a small step. By failing to make a statement on second reading and by failing to answer questions which were quite properly raised by hon. members at the resolution stage, he tried to make it appear that it was indeed a small step.

Here we do not have a small group of people, nor small boards or councils with unimportant functions. In this measure we have a body that will deal with the whole field of manpower and technology. One body is to advise the minister on everything over which he has power to preside. This bill will establish a council of 16 members; it will establish four advisory boards each having 12 members, or 48 persons in all. Under these two categories alone 64 persons are involved. In addition there are the regional and local manpower committees. Their number is not specified. Conceivably the sky could be the limit as to the numbers involved. This government has a reputation for multiplying bureaucracy. By this measure it could proliferate bureaucracy, through these boards or councils or committees that are to be set up, in increasing measure.

I also quarrel with the minister because nowhere are we given an idea of the costs involved. Under the British parliamentary tradition, at the resolution stage we ought to learn the dollars and cents that are involved. We should find out what will be a burden on the treasury. I hope that the minister may be cajoled into making a speech this afternoon and giving us this important information.

Another point worthy of consideration—undoubtedly this is in the minister's mind as the hon. member for Carleton (Mr. Bell) brought it to his attention yesterday—is that this measure may involve the downgrading of experienced employees who are already serving in the minister's department. I know from experience, and the hon. member for Carleton has mentioned this, that employees who were with the department in its national employment service days have been pushed into the background in the operations of the new department. These people may not be the best educated in the world and that is why they have been downgraded. Yet they have played their part. For 20 years or more, in some instances, they have dealt with the serious problems involved in finding jobs for Canadians. Surely their on-the-job training merits a more distinguished fate than that being meted out to them in the manpower offices across Canada.

**Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria):** They are being treated ruthlessly.

**Mr. McCleave:** As my learned and hon. friend from Cape Breton North and Victoria says, they have been treated ruthlessly. I think that is so. Morale in the department will suffer if such persons continue to feel that