

Government Organization

of trying to stretch the pay cheque to cover the cost of every day living requirements. I do not even need to mention the thousands of our citizens who are on fixed incomes, such as meagre and insufficient pensions, old age security, and so on.

Citizens as a whole do not relish strikes, whether or not they are directly involved. Strikes, however, are about the only method of protest the average wage earner has to bring his plight to the attention of the authorities. They are caused chiefly by the fact that the wage earner, who is also the prime consumer, finds that the requirements of a decent mode of living are getting beyond the reach of his or her income.

Let me direct the attention of hon. members to the heading of an editorial which appeared in the *Gazette* under date of May 30, 1966. The heading is, "Completely Out of Hand", and the editorial deals with the unsatisfactory and alarming situation now prevailing across our country with respect to strikes in general and the so-called illegal strikes in particular. I cannot say that I agree with all that is contained in the editorial I have mentioned, however, I do agree with the emphasis that has been placed on the increasing seriousness of the incidence of strikes in general.

The Chairman: Order. I apologize for interrupting the hon. member, but I feel he should restrict his remarks to the amendment now before the house.

Mr. Fawcett: With deference to you, Mr. Chairman, I hope to show you that these remarks are relevant to the general subject. It is my humble opinion that the situation will become more alarming each successive week and each successive month, unless concrete action is taken by some authoritative body to investigate the apparent gouging of the consumer and to take some effective action to provide the kind of protection that is so urgently needed.

My colleague, the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway, when speaking to her notice of motion on a subject which is directly related to the amendment, quoted a resolution which was adopted by the town council of Espanola, requesting just such a department of government as is suggested in the amendment. In this regard may I suggest that a great number of northern Ontario municipalities and town councils endorsed that Espanola resolution. I received a copy of the resolution, as well as a great number of letters from municipalities and town councils endorsing it.

Every time I return to my riding I am faced with a barrage of questions about what has been done by the government to cope with the increasing costs of the necessities of life. This seems to be the main concern of all.

In addition, I receive numerous letters of complaint regarding the lack of action on this matter. I can be reasonably sure that many hon. members on the opposite side of the house also receive letters of this sort. Until some authority of government is directly charged with the responsibility of protecting the consumer, Mr. Chairman, I humbly submit that the grave situation with regard to strikes will worsen and could ultimately result in complete economic chaos. Surely, if we are to give human values the consideration they justly deserve we cannot deny the necessity of supporting this amendment. Let me say in conclusion that I welcome just such an opportunity tonight.

The Chairman: Is the committee ready for the question?

Amendment (Mrs. MacInnis) negatived: Yeas, 8; nays, 28.

The Chairman: I declare the amendment lost. Shall clause 6 carry?

Clause 6 agreed to.

Clause 7 agreed to.

On clause 8—*Duties of Registrar General.*

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, clause 8 sets out the duties, powers and functions of the registrar general of Canada. The house has rejected our suggestion that the name of this department should be changed, but I think it is not being unfair for me to say that some of those who spoke against our amendment to clause 6 were not unalterably opposed to the idea of the department of the registrar general including amongst its functions some concern about matters of interest to consumers. We have made our position clear. We would prefer a department whose major responsibility was with respect to consumer affairs, but we are accepting the decision of the house on that count.

However, we do feel that at least a bit of consideration might be given to our point of view and that the committee might be willing to amend the duties, powers and functions of the registrar general so as to include some of the things about which we have been talking. We have spelled out our position in a number of speeches that have been made, so it is not