

The Hon. Member and the Member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow) gave examples of incidents involving people working on the Hill. Would it be possible for some of those situations to be dealt with under the provisions of Bill C-45, or would the powers of the organization to represent them be somewhat limited under this Bill?

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, obviously the employees would have some collective rights under Bill C-45. It would be incorrect to deny that they would have those. They would not, however, have identical benefits, which is what I believe the Member wants me to point out. If anyone is making the case that this Bill offers many benefits similar to those offered by the Canada Labour Code, one must ask why we are bothering with the Bill at all. It is obvious that the purpose of the Bill is to offer something between full rights and those which they have now, which, it could be argued, are not much. I think I am being generous in using the words "not much". The process which now exists is more of a hit-and-miss one. Employees can either present a grievance through the administration, which is not known to have a very high rate of success, or go through their Member of Parliament and hope that he or she can raise a temper tantrum with the Speaker, when the Member feels that the employee's case merits their support, and attempt to get redress in that way.

In my view, House employees should be accorded the right to strike, although not in all cases. Obviously, some people must be designated "essential". Most of the people in the House at the present time would have to be so designated. However, I would argue that we do not need a full complement of busboys so designated. I can relate to that job very easily because I happen to have done it in 1966. The same applies to the messenger staff, the cleaning people, and so on. Only a small number of those employees would have to be designated as essential in order to maintain certain standards.

It may be necessary for a few messengers who carry official documents to be designated as essential for the purposes of transmitting messages between the *Hansard* offices and the Clerk's office, but it would be highly exaggerated to say that all of the messengers and the bus drivers were essential to the functioning of Parliament. They may be essential to achieving a certain level of comfort for the parliamentarians, but that is not the same as being essential for the functioning of Parliament.

I am sure you have recognized already, Mr. Speaker, that a large number of our employees should be given full bargaining rights. At this point we do not even know whether they want all of these rights, and that is for them to decide collectively. However, apart from those people who would necessarily be designated essential, the rest of them should be afforded the full rights which they would receive under the Canada Labour Code.

Mr. Althouse: The Member has served for some time in the provincial Parliament at Queen's Park in Toronto where employees do have some bargaining rights. Did he experience

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any problems in carrying out his duties as a member of the provincial Parliament because employees at Queen's Park have more bargaining rights than they have here in Ottawa?

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, not all of them do. It is pretty confusing to try to compare the two situations. The Legislative Assembly building at Queen's Park is partially under the jurisdiction of the Speaker of the Assembly and partly under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Government Services. It would be rather difficult to draw a parallel between the two Legislatures. There are a large number of people in the building who are employees of other Government Departments or agencies, which adds to the confusion.

I know that the employees of the NDP caucus at Queen's Park have a method of airing their grievances. I am not sure whether that is a formal union, or only an association of employees. Not having been a member of that particular caucus, I did not take much time to inquire about how it operates. However, there are a large number of staff members in the Legislative Assembly building at Queen's Park who are unionized. As a matter of fact, there are a number of employees on the Hill in that situation as well. People working outside of the buildings, but within the precincts of Parliament Hill, are unionized. They have not turned the world upside down because of it, nor did they at Queen's Park.

In direct response to the Member's question, I never perceived that to be a problem while I was at Queen's Park. Since I have returned to the Hill, I have inquired whether there have been any disruptions or other undesirable effects due to having a certain number of the employees unionized, and I have not yet heard of any instance of that.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise to join the debate on Bill C-45. Our Party has been opposing the move by the Government to change the law as it applies to the collective bargaining rights of people who work on Parliament Hill. We are doing it for a very simple reason, and that is because we believe in equity, the right of individuals to form unions and alliances to protect their rights as employees. For that reason it is probably suitable that this particular debate occurs on equality day. It is a time when we are trying to extend rights of Canadian citizens equally to all.

● (1740)

Prior to coming to Parliament I was a representative of one group which was largely ignored when it comes to legislation permitting them to organize, and that is, the farming sector. I have always been quite interested in the application of these rights on an equitable basis to all sectors of our society. This Bill is unfortunate in that it comes at a time when many of the employees on the Hill had gotten quite a way ahead through the long process of organizing themselves. They had even succeeded several months ago in obtaining the right to begin certification procedures under the Canada Labour Code. There are five or six bargaining units here on the Hill who are well on the way to getting into the negotiating process and