

more. I hope that in committee we can get this changed. It is a common situation around this place that whenever money is mentioned members on the government side sit back and enjoy the protection of the fact that because money is involved the opposition cannot move an amendment; that there cannot be a vote on the question. I have news for them. I want to make it perfectly clear that there will be a vote on this issue in the standing committee and, if we do not win it there, in the House at the report stage.

I say this because it has been established on many occasions that this proposal for a minimum wage is one which affects private employers who employ people who come under federal labour jurisdiction. It is, therefore, not something which involves the expenditure of money from the federal treasury and members of the House of Commons, even private members, have a right to move amendments. This will be done. We have no intention of going through the report stage content to settle for \$1.75, when the president of the CLC says the figure ought to be \$2.50. Certainly it ought not to be less than \$2 an hour.

The Minister of Labour has departed from an undertaking he gave last fall. I do not regard this as a breach of faith; it is a case of changing his mind, but I think it is a mistake. He told us in the committee last fall that he would write into the legislation now before us a precise formula for upgrading the minimum wage. Now, instead, he has provided that beyond this \$1.75 further changes are to be made by Order in Council on the recommendation of the Minister of Labour. I suppose he is asking us to accept this on the grounds that he is sympathetic to labour. He is sympathetic all the way up to \$1.75 an hour!

● (9:10 p.m.)

He is asking us to believe that it is better to rely on getting an Order in Council to raise the minimum wage level than it is to take the time to get a piece of legislation through Parliament. He will appear before the committee. He is good at appearing and at answering questions, but I think he will have to make a much better case than he did tonight—though he did not even try to make one tonight—as to why he did not put into this bill a precise formula so we would know that when the cost of living index goes up and as the wage index goes up, out of these two in some combination there will be an automatic increase in the level of the minimum wage. These two things ought to be done; first, the present \$1.75 should be at least \$2 right now, if not more, and there should be in this bill an automatic formula for pushing the minimum wage up from here on.

I move to one of the other major sections of this amending bill, the part having to do with equal wages for equal work as between men and women. I welcome the idea—and the minister said this in his speech—of dealing with equality as between men and women, not by having special legislation for women which is what we had under the old Female Employees Equal Pay Act, for the very title of that act was a form of discrimination, but equality between the sexes must be covered by gen-

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eral legislation. Perhaps this is a technical or procedural matter, but it is a very important technical or procedural one to have in general labour standards legislation if there is to be equal pay for equal work.

An hon. Member: It is symbolic.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): But as my parliamentary assistant in the back row is pointing out, this is highly symbolic.

Mr. Mackasey: He is a member of the Waffle group.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Oh, no. The minister has made some remarks about this, but under the old legislation the only way anything could be done about a case of unequal pay was if the affected employee made a complaint. Now the government is providing for a certain amount of inspection to make sure that inequality of this kind is not practised. I urge that as long as there are kinds of employment where practically all the employees are women and other kinds of employment where practically all the employees are men, there is not equality and something is wrong.

When we get into the committee on this bill one amendment I intend to move at the appropriate stage will urge that in any establishment where more than 80 per cent of the positions in any job classification are held by members of one sex, the minister should order an investigation of the hiring, training and promoting practices in that industry to see whether something can be done to provide a more equitable distribution of the job classifications between male and female employees. I do not think you can solve this problem by edict or law that says there must be 50 per cent men and 50 per cent women in every one of these classifications. I think there was something in the debate last week at our convention regarding that general proposition.

Mr. Mackasey: Who voted against women? Your heckler did; I saw him.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Don't worry about my heckler. He is one of my valuable parliamentary assistants. He does not get the \$4,000 extra pay.

An hon. Member: I thought you were going to give him your share.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I have parliamentary assistants all over the House; my namesake over here, the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour over there, and several others.

An hon. Member: Is he a member of the Waffle group?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): The point I am trying to make—and my friends are just as serious about this as I am—is that if we are to do anything about achieving equality between the sexes in the work world, we have to work at it. We have to hold investigations to find out why certain patterns prevail. A fair amount has been done about this already. I refer to the investigation into the subject of sex in the Public Service. That was an