

*Financial Administration Act*

whether this provision will in fact work. I hope that the staff associations, which are very much worried about the question of classification, will watch with great care, what Treasury Board does, will note everything that the board does, will keep a very careful record of the results of its actions in the field of classification, and will arm members of parliament of all parties with the necessary information to produce a change in the law if the behavior of Treasury Board should require it.

Mr. Chairman, I do not think there is anything more I can usefully add at this point. I can only hope and pray that Treasury Board will behave like a good employer. I am not so sure what my prayer can accomplish, but I can at least hope, because if they do not behave like a good employer things will be pretty dismal for the civil service.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Shall clause 1 carry?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

● (8:30 p.m.)

**Mr. Knowles:** Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask the President of the Treasury Board a question which seems to come under clause 1.

**Mr. Benson:** Mr. Chairman, should we not be on clause 2?

**Mr. Knowles:** Clause 1 is deferred only when it is simply the short title. Clause 1 in this bill, as the minister recognizes, is one of considerable substance. It gives the Treasury Board authority with regard to a number of pension acts, and it is in relation to this that I should like to ask the minister a question.

As the minister knows, the joint committee on the public service of Canada is still meeting, primarily in respect of pension questions. I do not at this time intend to bring in the kind of matters they are dealing with in the committee, but I should like to say to the minister that when some of the delegates which have appeared before the committee have been asked about what should be done in respect of future, with particular reference to the writing of an escalation clause into the pension plan and things of that sort, the reply I think by all the delegates has been that this could be the subject of collective bargaining.

When the specific question, would you favour an adjustment of the rates that are paid to achieve such and such a purpose, was put, the answer was that that could be the subject of collective bargaining. I should like to ask

the minister whether, under the provisions of this and the other bills we have dealt with, it is clear that changes in the various pension plans, such as the Public Service Superannuation Act and others could be the subject of collective bargaining between employee organizations and the Treasury Board.

**Mr. Benson:** Mr. Chairman, contributions with regard to pensions are covered under the Public Service Superannuation Act and no collective bargaining agreement can affect a statute. Therefore changes in pensions of the public service are not bargained in the collective bargaining sense. I am informed they would have to be approved by parliament and would take the form of amendments to the Public Service Superannuation Act.

**Mr. Knowles:** Is that any different from some of the other things which might be agreed to as a result of collective bargaining? Are there not other cases in which the result of collective bargaining would call for an enactment by parliament? As I understand it, the only thing the government can undertake at these collective bargaining sessions is to bring these matters before parliament. If that is the case in respect of other areas, could it not be the same in respect of pension matters?

**Mr. Benson:** In the new bill clause 56(2) provides:

No collective agreement shall provide, directly or indirectly, for the alteration or elimination of any existing term or condition of employment or the establishment of any new term or condition of employment,

(a) the alteration or elimination of which or the establishment of which, as the case may be, would require or have the effect of requiring the enactment or amendment of any legislation by parliament, except for the purpose of appropriating moneys required for its implementation, or

(b) that has been or may be, as the case may be, established pursuant to any act specified in schedule C.

Then schedule C mentions the four acts, the Government Employees Compensation Act, the Government Vessels Discipline Act, the Public Service Employment Act and the Public Service Superannuation Act.

**Mr. Knowles:** I still wonder whether we did not have an understanding in the committee that in fact there would be areas in which part of the agreement between the government and the employee organizations would be an undertaking on the part of the government to seek certain changes in parliament.