

Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act

with the piecemeal, band-aid approach of this piece of legislation. It was a very frustrating process for me, and I was involved from square one until third reading in the House, because we could not address seriously or in a genuine fashion the concerns of those four target groups. We were putting in place a piece of legislation for those four communities in Canada, and those four communities were saying that the Canadian Government was not listening because the piece of legislation was not moving on the issues on which they wanted to move.

● (1200)

Now, in a very similar fashion, we have Bill C-45 before us. Rather than talking about employment equity, we are now talking about equity for workers on Parliament Hill so that they will be on equal ground with outside workers. To simplify the debate to its common denominator, basically they are saying that cafeteria workers on Parliament Hill and cafeteria workers outside Parliament Hill should somehow within Government framework be on equal footing. Those two groups of workers should be receiving equal treatment from the federal Government. Those workers somewhere else in the federal bureaucracy and those on Parliament Hill should be treated with the same degree of respect. In essence, they are providing the same type of service in their own areas. Therefore, under the umbrella of the federal Government, why are we not prepared in this piece of legislation to allow workers on Parliament Hill the same rights presently enjoyed by workers off Parliament Hill? It is not a question of giving special rights. It is not a question of saying that we will give them the privileges of a, b, or c. If Bill C-45 were strengthened, we would be ensuring parity among workers under the federal Government and the rights of those under the Public Service Alliance of Canada within the federal bureaucracy would certainly prevail here.

There are a number of very contentious issues which and provide the basis of disapproval for Bill C-45. One is the inability of workers under this piece of legislation to deal with serious issues affecting their jobs, that is to say, under Bill C-45 individuals would have the right simply to dither about working conditions, numbers of hours, and salaries. However, this particular piece of legislation would not provide for important matters such as job classification, appointment, appraisal, promotion, demotion, transfer, lay-off, and the release of employees. If we do not allow for movement and opportunity for discussion and representation on these issues, what will this piece of legislation do?

In the few seconds remaining, I should like to refer to the issue of complaints on the job. Rather than employees having the benefit of a union body or organization bringing forward a complaint on their behalf, this piece of legislation would dictate that the individual would have to come forward and identify himself or herself. That is not good enough. It is almost a form of intimidation. Basically it does not say: "If you have a legitimate complaint, we do not wish to have your name or identity known. As long as it is a legitimate concern

within the system, we will allow the union to raise it on your behalf so that not only your concern will be corrected, if the problem is of particular importance to other individuals who are experiencing it their lot could be improved". That is not guaranteed in the Bill. It places the onus on the individual to come forward; individuals are intimidated and threatened to come forward under the present system.

I see you motioning, Mr. Speaker, that my time is up. I appreciate having had this opportunity, and I look forward to the Government moving on some very serious concerns and very serious flaws which are presently embodied in the Bill.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a few comments on Bill C-45. It is a very important issue because there are some 3,000 employees of the House of Commons. It strikes me as being very embarrassing that in 1986 some 3,000 employees of this House do not have the right to form a trade union or the right collective bargaining. They do not have the rights of other workers in all kinds of other industries. This is 1986. We have the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We have all kinds of rights for all kinds of people who work in the country from coast to coast.

In my own riding there are trade unions and workers with rights. They negotiate their salaries, working conditions, and conditions regarding safety on the job. In some cases they negotiate for their pensions. However, the House of Commons, the supreme law-making body of the land, has workers who do not have those rights. This is very shameful in 1986.

Here we are being sanctimonious as a Parliament on all kinds of issues, yet we have people working for us who do not have basic, fundamental rights. As I said, it is an outright shame. We do not practise what we preach. I see a Member from Cape Breton over here; there are trade unions in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Peterson: Hamilton West.

Mr. Nystrom: In fact, in Hamilton there are even more trade unions. They have rights. The workers of Stelco have rights to collective bargaining, and rights *vis-à-vis* grievance procedures. They have rights with regard to working conditions, health and safety, and so on. Why do those workers have those rights and employees of the House of Commons do not have them? A tremendous amount of shame is reflected on every Member of the House of Commons. I hope, with all these new Members of the Conservative Party we can somehow break this terrible precedent of the past and give workers on the Hill, be they in the cafeterias, the Library, messenger services, the post office, or whatever, full and total collective bargaining rights and privileges like those enjoyed by employees of the Parliament of Great Britain.

Margaret Thatcher is a very conservative Conservative; she is more Conservative than most Conservatives in our House. However, she does not try to roll back the clock in terms of unionizing the employees of the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Why are my friends in the Conservative Party