

*Standards Council of Canada***Mr. Pepin:** 1966.

Mr. Lundrigan: 1966; the minister indicated a steering committee was set up, the CSA was consulted and the recommendation of the steering committee was that there be a federal-provincial conference to study this whole matter. I believe this was consummated in January of 1968. As a result of that conference there was almost unanimous agreement. The minister almost gave the impression that these groups were all holding their breath waiting for the government to introduce this piece of legislation.

● (3:50 p.m.)

I believe there has been a misunderstanding between the governments of the provinces, the existing organizations, various other groups of interested people and the federal government. I suppose we all agree with the concept underlying the establishment of a council, a council which would play a supporting role in co-operation with existing organizations, as is the case in many countries of the western world. There is, indeed, a need for co-ordination of effort in this field, a need for the promotion of the work internationally. It might be a good thing. It might cause an overflow effect which would benefit industry and international trade. I have the impression that the provinces believed this was the purpose of the legislation. I have the impression the Canadian Standards Association believed this was the purpose of the measure. If, when the discussions were going on, I had been asked my own opinion as a Member of Parliament, I would have said I was in favour of the kind of thing the government was proposing to the provinces and the organizations.

When we look at the legislation, however, we realize that the government evidently does not intend to play a supporting role. The intention is, basically, to create the power to usurp the entire role of any others engaged in this field. From representations I have received, I am aware that a number of provinces are having second thoughts after seeing the bill. I should like the minister to tell us how many provinces have made representations to him since the bill was placed before the House for first reading on December 1, seriously questioning the powers provided for in the bill. The provinces feel it is a far cry from the objects and aims set out when this measure was in contemplation, and the provisions which are in fact contained in Bill C-163.

even more difficult to quarrel with some of the basic aims of the legislation. The minister indicated that the provinces agree there is a need in Canada for a standards council in order to co-ordinate and support the standards which exist, not only in Canada but internationally. It is difficult to quarrel with the fact that over the years governments, private industry, consumers and the Canadian Standards Association have all been involved. All have made their points of view known and the government has acted accordingly.

I do not honestly think that the minister has told the whole truth. Perhaps I won't tell the whole truth. My aim is to look at some of the aspects which the minister very carefully, and perhaps deliberately, avoided. It struck me as being more funny than rational that the minister indicated the council would be totally and completely independent of government. All throughout his remarks he emphasized that this would be a totally independent agency, yet clause 3 of the bill reads:

A corporation is hereby established to be known as the Standards Council of Canada consisting of

(a) six members who are employed in the public service of Canada,

(b) ten members, one member to be nominated by the Lieutenant Governor in Council of each of the ten provinces, and

(c) not more than forty-one other members, to be appointed by the Governor in Council as provided in section 6.

Right off the bat I smell a rat. I will not comment on that aspect, any further. Perhaps it is not important. I point out to hon. members that we can take exception to the minister's point of view in that regard.

I wish to make some observations on this bill. First, there is the involvement of the CSA, the provinces, industry, consumer groups, etc., the great amount of consultation which is taking place and the consent of these groups to this legislation. This is what the minister said. Second, I want to deal with the powers given to the council under section 4 and to take issue with the minister's statement that the basic aim of the legislation is to foster and promote co-ordination between existing organizations, not to replace them. Third, I want to get involved in the economics and to raise the question of the capability of the council, when it is established, as far as its technical and administrative aspects are concerned. These are the points with which I wish to deal.

In the area of consultation, the minister said he consulted with the provinces. He indicated that there was some discussion as far back as 1967.