that in addition to the dismissal of the employee concerned, there is the problem of what happens to some of his benefits when he is dismissed. I hope this question will be gone into in any inquiry that is set up under this bill.

As I said with regard to the bill that was before us a few minutes ago, I am still very much disturbed by the fact that classification of employees is exclusively within the authority of the Treasury Board, and that the collective bargaining process will not be such as to have any effect on the classification of employees. Anyone who has represented workers at any time knows perfectly well that classification is as related to wage determination as any other factor in the labour-management relationship. As I said the other day, you could easily get a wage increase on Monday and find it eroded on Tuesday by a reclassification that the employer unilaterally undertakes. Fiddling with classifications, reclassifying positions, reducing the rate attached to a particular classification, and all that kind of thing, immediately affects the total salary situation.

Again I repeat what I said in committee and have said once or twice before on the floor of this house, that even though I grant without reservation that it is a normal right of the employer initially to classify the work that has to be done under him, I still see no reason—I did not see any in committee—why the collective agreement could not contain some provision for negotiation in cases of reclassification or changes in classification, even through the initial step is taken. When you have a collective agreement, the collective agreement in this case, I imagine, as in all other cases, will set out in one way or another all the classifications of employees and the particular salary or salary ranges applicable to a given classification. I hold the view that I may say was shared by Mr. Justice Laskin who, before he was appointed to the bench was one of the leading arbitrators and conciliators in the province of Ontario, if not in Canada, that once you have set in a collective agreement particular classifications of employees, it should not be within the power of the employer unilaterally to erode the collective agreement by either withdrawing classifications or fiddling with them during the term of the collective agreement.

That is why I am disturbed by the fact that the area of classification of employees is outside the realm of collective bargaining under a previous bill considered and passed by this house. I can only express again the hope, as I did on another occasion, that Treasury Board officials and the Treasury Board itself will be mighty careful about their behavior with regard to classifications. I do not suppose I have known anything quite so disruptive and, if I may say so in the presence of the President of the Treasury Board and some of his officials, in a sense so shameful as the reclassification and red circling which went on in the federal civil service in the last number of months. The fact that the way it was done was regrettable is, I think, proven by the fact that many thousands of the original reclassifications were abandoned or changed and many of the red circles were removed. In my submission, the only decent way of reclassifying and changing rates for classifications is not to hurt the incumbent employee, not to make the new, lower rate applicable to the person already on the job but to make it applicable only to a new employee undertaking the job for the first time.

I submit that this could not have happened if classification had been part of an existing collective bargaining regime. Perhaps it is too strong to say that it could not have happened, but it certainly would have been much less likely to happen if that had been the case. If Treasury Board indulges in the same kind of reclassification in the future, using its exclusive right in this field to do that kind of thing, namely to red circle and green circle as they have in the last number of months, they will create precisely the same confusion, resentment and loss of morale which the red circling produced in many areas of the civil service, the customs and excise area and many others, in the last number of months. It is obvious that nothing we can say or do will change the government's mind on this question of keeping classification out of the collective bargaining process, because we tried for many, many hours in the joint committee and I personally, as I said the other day, felt embarrassed from time to time at being so annoying and persistent in my demands on this and related issues.

Certainly we could move an amendment on the floor of this committee. If we did that, the Whip of the Liberal party would make sure that those who have gone for coffee, or wherever they have gone, would be brought back into the chamber and there would be further delays, which we are determined to try to avoid. So we have to accept the government's unjustifiably adamant position, in my opinion, on this matter, give the bill a chance, and see