

Mr. Chas L. Caccia (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, we are grateful to the hon. member for raising this problem persistently over an extended period of time. I can understand his frustration and his desire to see a satisfactory solution. We should like to assure him, Mr. Speaker, that it is certainly not a question of subservience vis-à-vis the United States or timidity on our part. If it has taken so long it is because the issue is rather complex. It was initially a question of obtaining from the United States a certain degree of reciprocity and now, since this avenue has been explored, it is a question of deciding whether we want to adopt similar criteria and standards of screening work permits to those adopted by the United States vis-à-vis our performers.

We are studying this matter in the department and are well aware of the fact that the entrance into Canada of U.S. performers also generates a certain amount of employment for supporting crews and staff in the service industry. Therefore we would like to arrive at a decision which will not cut off our nose to spite our face.

PUBLIC SERVICE—REQUEST THAT PRESENT LEGISLATION
AFFECTING RELATIONSHIP WITH GOVERNMENT BE
REVIEWED BY COMMITTEE

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): On Wednesday, June 9, Mr. Speaker, I asked the question which brings us together this evening, and when the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Gillespie) replies later I will tell the House the sacrifice the hon. member has made in order to be here. My question was as follows:

Would the minister consider referring in the next session the legislation which deals with the government's relationship with its public servants to a committee of the House for review, with power to recommend changes?

As will be found at page 6529 of *Hansard*, the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) replied as follows:

We will certainly give consideration to that.

If he had rested there I would have no complaint, but he went on to say—and this is what gets some people in trouble:

I think there is no doubt that any legislative proposals which the government would put forward would go to a parliamentary committee.

Of course, under the rules of the House that would be so. I was more concerned that the initiation of the changes made come from Members of Parliament rather than from the bureaucrats behind a minister. Between June 15, 1966, and February 3, 1967, a special joint committee of this House and the other place considered measures dealing with employer and employee relations in the public service of Canada. Several meetings dealt with superannuation and the remainder, almost two dozen, dealt with an act respecting employer and employee relations in the public service of Canada, an act respecting employment in the public service of Canada and an act respecting employment in the public service of

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Canada and an act to amend the Financial Administration Act. In other words, we had four things before us. The major problem lay in the development of collective bargaining in the public service.

• (10:30 p.m.)

It is interesting to read what the man who is to be our star witness tomorrow, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson)—and I take nothing away from him in his performance of a very difficult task—had to say at that time. He was then Minister of National Revenue and President of the Treasury Board. At page 201 of *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* No. 6 of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Employer-Employee Relations in the Public Service of Canada, he is reported as saying:

—in the largely uncharted area of public service collective bargaining, conventional solutions are not, in all circumstances, capable of dealing with certain unique aspects of public service relationships. To meet these new and unique circumstances we have had to develop new and unique solutions.

Probably that is exactly what happened. In any event, Mr. Speaker, I had in mind when I raised the question that Parliament should have a chance to look at the relations between the government and the public servants of Canada, not at the behest of the government but at our own behest since I suppose most public servants will say ultimately, if nothing is done, "Why did you not do something about the circumstances under which we are employed?"

I wish to raise seven questions, and I will go over them as quickly as I can. They are suggested by the Clyne report. First, is enough flexibility provided now, or should more be provided in this area, as the report suggests? Second, what types of public servants at a senior level should be excluded from collective bargaining? For those outside the scope of the Clyne report who are at other levels, the third question is, how has the classification system worked out? What changes should be made? Fourth, what about retroactive pay going back for months but paid on an annual basis? This matter has given rise to concern for some public servants.

The fifth question relates to disparities because of prevailing rates. I asked the Minister of Labour (Mr. MacKasey) a question about that matter earlier today. That exchange took place when we were dealing with the subject. It did not take place during the question period but when we were dealing with the labour bill, at about five o'clock. My sixth question, if I may revert to the question of classification again, is, what about those who somehow get scaled down in classification? I am thinking of a fellow who has lost \$10,000 that way. Raising his problem here the House itself would be complicated and I do not think anyone would wish to allow me half an hour in which to do so. However, because the case is of a technical nature does not mean that I should be debarred from raising it somewhere, and I should like to raise it in committee. The seventh question has to do with language. Is the language question to be dealt with as a one-sided pronouncement by government or as a method of collective bargaining between the Government of Canada and the public service?