

went on strike? I am thinking of the security guards, for example, or for that matter anybody related to the maintenance of this place. Would the Member cross a picket line if the front of this building were picketed? I would like to know what she would do in that instance.

• (1610)

Ms. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to answer that question. I certainly would not cross a picket line. It is very important to recognize the rights of workers. With regard to strikes, it seems to me that in the past Members of Parliament have shown the right to strike. I am thinking of a number of occasions when this House has been closed down. I do not know that Canada suffered too much during those incidents.

In any collective bargaining agreement, part of the negotiations are to clarify essential services. Having participated in Public Service negotiations, and sometimes strikes, in Vancouver when I was working with the Public Welfare Department there, I know that it is quite possible to keep essential services operating. Unions are very understanding of what these essential services are and make arrangements for the workers to continue providing those services.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[Translation]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 66, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier)—Official Languages—Assistance for official language minority groups—Government position. b) Inquiry when Government will act; the Hon. Member for Drummond (Mr. Guilbault)—Research and Development—Textiles—Government position; the Hon. Member for Scarborough West (Mr. Stackhouse)—Energy—Suggested discounts for motorists paying cash for gasoline.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

PARLIAMENTARY EMPLOYMENT AND STAFF RELATIONS ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Hnatyshyn that Bill C-45, an Act respecting employment and employer and employee relations in the Senate and House of Commons, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee and the amendment (Ms. Copps) (p. 8331).

Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to participate in this debate because I have watched, from a very close range, the recent successful efforts to organize by employees who work on Parliament Hill. When many of the employees decided it was time for them to try to get the law changed so that they would have the same right of collective bargaining as have all the other people who work in the country, my then research assistant volunteered to help them in their organizing efforts. He spent about two years working four or five evenings a week on the campaign. He then took a leave of absence without pay to work full time in the organizing effort. He worked out of my office, and I was very happy to permit and encourage him to do that because I believe, of course, that every worker in Canada should be entitled, by law, to belong to the union of their choice.

When people who work on the Hill heard that an effort was being made to form the union and to have the law changed to give them the right to collective bargaining, they joined in overwhelming numbers. Employees in the restaurant and cafeterias, the messenger and distributing services, maintenance employees, employees in the Library, in French and English indexing and in the printing service, and the security people and committee clerks all joined.

Bill C-45 was tabled in the House on April 30, 1985, just a few weeks after the Canada Labour Relations Board had completed hearings on the majority of the certification applications received from the House of Commons, Senate, and Library of Parliament employees. We believe that this Bill is aimed at restricting the collective bargaining rights of these employees, the rights which they would have had under the provisions of the Canada Labour Relations Code.

Let us look at the provisions of this Bill. Employees of Members of Parliament and the Leaders of the Parties, and research staffs of the Parties are excluded from some clauses of the Bill. These employees suffer from the same problems as other employees working on Parliament Hill. They have the same problems with arbitrary management, low pay, unpaid overtime, and a lack of job security. Another clause prevents any negotiation on classification issues. There would be no negotiations, under the provisions of this Bill, for questions of job description, assignment of pay levels, or change in duties. The present system of classification would be left unchanged. This system is totally unacceptable and is the cause of much employee dissatisfaction.

Under another clause no arbitral award can deal with appointments, appraisals, promotions, demotions, transfers, lay-offs, and releases. This is similar to the Public Service Staff Relations Act, but other Public Service employees have rights under the Public Service Employment Act, which this Bill does not provide for employees on the Hill.

Another section restricts the right of grievance to the individual employee. Workplace problems cannot be addressed by union grievances, grievances filed on behalf of a group of workers.