statement in respect of a number of matters which may be dealt with by way of amendment later in our considerations. It might be well to have this statement in one piece, so perhaps the committee will agree to call it six o'clock.

The Chairman: Shall I call it six o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

At six o'clock the committee took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The committee resumed at 8 p.m.

Mr. MacEachen: Before we rose at six o'clock, Mr. Chairman, I stated that I intended to make a statement, which I shall make now, as to certain general proposals affecting the hours of work provisions of the measure which I intend to move at a later stage in the committee. Perhaps the committee will recall that we left off consideration of Bill No. C-126 clause by clause in committee of the whole last October 19. Members of the government, and no doubt other members of the house, have received representations from a number of industries expressing concern about the effects of the hours of work provision of the bill upon their operations. The transportation industries have been particularly concerned about their operating employees.

Before we resume consideration of clause 5, I should like to speak about those representations and the way we propose to meet them. My colleagues and I have had the benefit of very useful discussions with delegations from industries affected, both employer and employee groups, and some very helpful briefs have been presented. I, myself, have met with various groups across the country. As a result of these discussions, and further consideration, we propose to introduce several amendments which I think will allay the apprehension that has been expressed on the possible adverse effects of the legislation. At the same time, Mr. Chairman, I have been impressed by the general support for the bill and its objectives throughout the country.

There is a widely held belief in Canada that the improvement in the conditions of work which our economic development makes possible should be shared by all, and this bill is in keeping with that desire. Our conclusions, based on the representations made to us, are that for a large part of the employment subject to the bill, the provisions of part I of the bill, dealing with hours of work, will not cause undue dislocation. There is, however, other employment where through practice, and in the absence of any legal regulation, working hours so exceed the standard set by part I that compliance within the adjustment period of 18 months presently provided within the bill is not possible without hardship. There are other cases, ships' crews to mention an example, where working conditions make it difficult to comply with the requirements of part I either now or in the foreseeable future. For some of these industries, the problem can be met by extending the period for adjustment provided by deferment under clause 51. For others, the extension of the time will not provide a solution. It may be necessary to arrive at standards differing from those provided in the act to meet the peculiar conditions of employment.

It would, of course, not be feasible to spell out in the bill the differences in hours of work standards to fit special cases. What is needed is a method of relieving an industry or the operations within an industry from the requirements of part I over an extended period of time where they are shown to be inappropriate, and to prescribe hours standards with which the industry will be required to comply.

The amendment which will be introduced when we come to clause 51 will do two things. It will provide, as is now provided in clause 51, that the application of part I, hours of work, may be stayed for a period of not more than 18 months by order of the Minister of Labour applicable to any federal work, undertaking or business or any class of employees in it, if it is shown that the hours of work provisions would be unduly prejudicial to the employees or seriously detrimental to the operation of the business. If there is reason to believe that the undertakings subject to the order may not be able to comply directly with the provisions of part I in 18 months, an inquiry will be held pursuant to clause 35. The purpose of this inquiry will be to investigate the facts fully, afford an opportunity to the employers and employees affected to be heard, and to recommend whether the deferment period ought to be extended. Following the inquiry the governor in council, on the recommendation of the Minister of Labour, may issue an order deferring the operation of part I for a period fixed in the order, and that period may be extended by subsequent orders.

A deferment order issued by the minister, or an extending order made by the governor