

*Government Orders*

A minister of the Crown is in the position that I am sure the president of General Motors or any other major corporate head would love to be in of being able to decide to bypass the union completely and go directly to the members. But that is not the way collective bargaining works. It is undermining the role of unions in the collective bargaining process and that fits with the ideology of the government.

What it does not do is serve the public interest well in the long run. Nor does it serve the employees who belong to a democratic organization and who are responsible themselves for determining whether their union is or is not representing them well. That is not up to the employer, the other side of the table, to determine.

We did hear some excellent representations before the legislative committee. I regret first that the government felt obliged to introduce an unpopular, unwelcome, undiscussed measure into this bill at the last moment and then refused to remove those provisions.

Second, I regret very much that despite the excellent representations before the committee, it has chosen not to apply the same working conditions to its own employees as it forces private sector employers to provide.

Third, I regret that it has saddled the future government with a system that is unworkable and simply will not be helpful to the collective bargaining process.

**An hon. member:** That is because it is leaving office.

**Mrs. Catterall:** It is a system that undermines the commitment that both employer and workers must have to the bargaining table as the place to resolve issues, to that process as the way of maintaining stability in both public and private sector employment and to that process as the foundation of developing a more co-operative partnership among employers, workers and government, if this country is going to remain competitive, increase productivity and be ready to be able to face the challenges of the future.

**Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today to once again discuss Bill C-101. As you know, this bill was introduced in December of last year. Today we are discussing third reading of the bill.

The amendments to the Canada Labour Code, parts II and III, were the result of over two years of consultation, as you heard the minister say, with employer groups and

unions. Neither side in this discussion got everything they wanted but a consensus was reached.

• (1225)

For the most part, we have here needed improvements to the Canada Labour Code. We have improvements in the protection for pregnant and nursing women in the work place. We have improvements in parental leave provisions. We have improvements in protection for injured workers. We have improvements in the administration of the code to speed up the determination of workers' rights and we have improvements in wage protection for workers.

As stated here and in the committee hearings, we also have the regressive step of a ministerial ordered vote on the employer's last offer. This measure which applies to both private and public sector workers came about without consultation, without consensus and most obviously without any stated need from either the private sector employers or the unions.

Its inclusion in this bill will not improve labour relations in federal jurisdiction. The reason it is there has nothing to do with labour relations in federal jurisdiction. It is there to simply advance an ideological position that holds that the employer must have more rights than the workers in the collective bargaining process.

In the legislative committee we heard from the Minister of Labour and the minister responsible for Canada Post. We heard from 10 witnesses, 7 from labour, 2 from the employers, as well as the chair of the Public Service Staff Relations Board. With the exception of the two ministers, we did not hear from one person who supported the directed vote amendments to the Canada Labour Code and the Public Service Staff Relations Act.

A recent ruling by the Canada Labour Relations Board points to one of the difficulties in holding these types of votes. The Canada Labour Code does not prohibit the use of scabs. The directed vote provision of this bill does not define who is in the bargaining unit and who is not.

In hearing a certification application by a company union, the CLRB considered scabs to be part of the existing bargaining unit. This opens the way for the company to lock out its workers, hire scabs, await the call of the vote by the minister and be assured of effectively decertifying the bargaining agent by stacking the vote