

*Supply*

zations in Canada. These amendments, because they are not excessive and strike a balance in the vast range of labour legislation in Canada, have been accepted by both labour and management.

Mr. Speaker, I am therefore prepared to assume that the Progressive Conservative Party labour relations critic is acting in good faith and I am also prepared to believe in the good faith and good intentions of the labour relations critic for the New Democratic Party. I therefore hope that the Parliamentary House Leaders, both on the Government and the Opposition sides, will be able to reach an agreement within the next few days so that Bill C-34 can be adopted as soon as possible.

I have received copies of some correspondence which I would like to quote. These are public documents, since these telegrams were sent to the Leader of the Government, the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Leader of the New Democratic Party. Nevertheless, for the purposes of our debate today, I would like to have them read into the record.

I shall first recall, if I may, a letter sent a few days ago to the Leader of the Government in the House (Mr. Pinard) by the President of the Canadian Labour Congress, Dennis McDermott, who said, and I quote:

● (1220)

*[English]*

I am writing to express my support for Bill C-34, an Act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Financial Administration Act.

While no piece of legislation is perfect, the proposals contained within this Bill are on balance most welcome. The task of consolidating health and safety within the federal jurisdiction is a large one and Cabinet is to be congratulated on bringing the process this far.

My concern is that these amendments may remain simply proposals and not be enacted into law. Both the Progressive Conservative Party and the New Democratic Party have publicly expressed support for Bill C-34. I urge you to give the health and safety of Canadians working within the federal jurisdiction the highest priority and pass this Bill before the summer recess.

I can think of no more fitting conclusion to this session of Parliament and era of Government.

Yours sincerely,

Dennis McDermott  
President

*[Translation]*

Mr. Speaker, after reading this letter, I wrote to the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party and the Leader of the New Democratic Party, urging them to tell their respective House Leaders to consult with the Government House Leader, in order to expedite the passage of this Bill through the House. I am waiting for a reply from the two Opposition leaders. I do not expect to receive a reply personally, but I hope that the Government House Leader will receive a positive answer from the Opposition House Leaders.

Another letter was sent to us recently by the Director of the Rehabilitation Institute of Ottawa, and I quote:

*[English]*

As an association working with disabled citizens in Ottawa Carleton, we are very pleased that our Government is proposing to change the Canada Labour Code, to ensure that any handicapped person employed in an occupation under the Federal Government will receive at least the minimum wage.

This amendment is long overdue and we encourage all members to pass this agreement as speedily as humanly possible. Thank you very much for your efforts to do this.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Anne van Gaal  
Director of Services

*[Translation]*

This is a statement by a very important group in our society. I think it is clear that the objectives of this Bill are receiving considerable support from Canadians as a whole.

We also received a telegram from Montreal a few days ago, during the proceedings of the recent convention of the Canadian Labour Congress, and I quote:

*[English]*

Re amendments to the Canada Labour Code. I have sent a telegram today to the Prime Minister asking him to give us a firm undertaking for a set procedure under a rigid time table to see the amendments to the Code passed into law during the current session of Parliament. Delegates to the 15th constitutional convention of the Canadian Labour Congress here in Montreal have expressed very strong anxiety that the amendments to the Code be passed into law forthwith—

*[Translation]*

Mr. Speaker, I have received a host of letters and statements in support of this Bill, asking all three parties in the House to adopt the Bill as soon as possible. I do not intend to read through all this correspondence. We can of course lay it on the Table and perhaps expand on its contents when the Bill passes the second reading stage, if the Opposition parties ever agree with the Government to refer the Bill to the Standing Committee. However, I would like to mention the press release issued by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, dated May 24, in which the Council supports the proposed legislation and urges the Parliament of Canada to pass this Bill as soon as possible, and I quote:

The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women supports the amendments to the Canada Labour Code proposed by the federal Minister of Labour, André Ouellet, and hopes that the legislation will be adopted very shortly.

I think it is important to stress the major amendments proposed to the Canada Labour Code. These amendments are connected with Part III and deal with labour standards. It is in this part, more specifically, that the Government wishes to make major amendments to give women better protection on the labour market.

We are proposing a series of amendments that cover child care leave, which will mean that a mother who must obtain a certain amount of leave because she is going to have a baby