

*Anti-Inflation Act*

committee hearings we will hear some answers to this type of question.

Again when we take a look at clause 11 we see it is proposed to amend the provisions that now exist which allow Bill C-73 to be terminated by resolution of this House. This was one of the most contentious questions when Bill C-73 was being debated. We felt that the 39-month period the government asked for in that bill was too long. We wanted the legislation to terminate in 18 months. The reply was that they would give the opportunity for 50 members in this House to request a debate and that within 15 days the matter would have to be disposed of and if the House so saw fit the legislation could expire whenever the resolution required. That is being amended, and we are now being asked to consider not that this House have the sole prerogative but that the Senate now concur in the termination of the programs in the legislation.

It may be acceptable to have the Senate at least pass on the matter, but surely if it is to be dealt with within 15 days of being raised in this House there should be some time limitation on the Senate rather than having the provision, as it now appears to be, that the Senate be asked to concur in the motion to terminate the legislation, with absolutely no time limitation concerning when that honourable House would decide on the suggestion. I know there may be other members in this House who have something to say concerning the right of the Senate to concur or otherwise in any termination motion we might see fit to pass in this House.

So far as I am concerned the end result of a restraint program should be growth and not a regimented and controlled economy. That is what we fear. We believe the 39-month period is too long. We are apprehensive that it will not be terminated at that time and could continue considerably longer.

In conclusion let me re-state our position. I believe some program of restraint is necessary at this time. However, I also believe that the present program will not easily be fulfilled. It will not be easily fulfilled for the simple reason that there is too much confusion. The people do not perceive that the government is leading the way or giving an example by paying serious attention to its profligate ways. The present administration should not count on speedy passage of this bill. There are too many questions to be answered. The present administration should not count on our support at all stages of this bill, which is an amending bill. It should not count on our support at all stages without further explanation and amendments. This country is too young, too vibrant, to need prolonged restrictions. Canada has immense promise, and I would like nothing better than to see it realize that promise.

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, the members of the New Democratic Party will support this bill for the simple reason that we insisted from the beginning that this law, like many other laws of Canada, should have in it provisions so that those who feel they are being mistreated by the application of the law would have the right to appeal to an impartial body against decisions of the Anti-Inflation Board.

[Mr. Stevens.]

It was both amusing and interesting to hear the minister espouse that view when he introduced this bill because I can remember, if the minister has forgotten—and I would not fault him if he tried to forget—the cavalier sneering way in which he and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) refused the suggestion of members of the opposition parties. The former leader of the official opposition and the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) stated that this kind of appeal section was required in the law. Let me remind the minister of a couple of illustrations of what I mean.

On February 16 the then leader of the official opposition asked the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald) a question, as recorded at page 10955 of *Hansard*, which in part was as follows:

... is the government by amendment, administrative order or some other way prepared to assure the right of a direct appeal of board rulings without the necessity of a party defying the board before such an appeal can be launched?

Later on, after some further questions are asked, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald) replied:

... if a party does not agree with a decision of the board, then the board will refer the matter for the decision of the administrator. This does not necessarily indicate non-compliance on the part of the parties. Just to put it in the context of the normal judicial procedure, parties who are satisfied with the outcome of litigation normally do not appeal.

Of course the minister should have known then—and I think he did know but was trying to avoid admitting—that they would have to change the act because one party in the case of the paperworkers, the union members, could not appeal.

On February 18 the Leader of the New Democratic Party put some questions to the Prime Minister, as recorded at page 11048 of *Hansard*. He asked the Prime Minister:

... will the government consider changing the legislation so that the right of appeal is open to both the employers and the employees?

The Prime Minister replied in part as follows:

... if the employer is paying wages that are higher than permitted by the guidelines, it seems proper for the other to issue against the employer, not the employee. Therefore, it is the employer who should have the right of appeal if he does not agree with it.

● (2040)

In other words, even less than a month ago the Prime Minister did not accept the idea that any party adversely affected should have the right to appeal. Today of course the minister comes in with his bill, amending the procedure as was suggested by members of the opposition, as if there never was a problem, the government never had any doubts about this, the government was always willing to be fair. Of course nothing could be further from the truth. But as usual today the Liberal government was right when it opposed this kind of appeal procedure, and it is right today when it brings in this appeal procedure.

We will support the bill. I will talk a little later about the effects that this appeal procedure will have on the administration of the whole program, but I want to deal for a little while with the confident way in which the minister was arguing this afternoon when he introduced the bill. Although the government knew it would take considerable time before the effects of the program would be felt and before inflation would moderate substantially, lo and behold, already it is working, and the minister had figures