

Business of the House

What is the solution for this breach of a law of Parliament on the part of these people across the way? Well, their solution is to introduce a motion to pass a bill, the effect of which will be not to remove that section of that act, just to ignore it and to supersede it with something else.

[Translation]

One wonders, Mr. Speaker, what will happen once the government's proposed legislation is passed. What will happen for instance, if public servants take the board's decision and go before the courts and ask for the new legislation as passed by Parliament to be repealed, because it violates existing legislation?

[English]

I see the government House leader is with us. I am sure he has been researching why it is that he made a mistake and used the wrong rule in order to get this motion passed, or is it that he really did not want that motion passed at all, that he said: "Let us use the wrong rule and let us see what it does." Well, of course, with the right rule, according to the government, or the rule that would have worked more effectively, it could have probably got its motion passed. After all, much to my chagrin and yours, Mr. Speaker, being the objective person that you are, the government is Conservative and, of course, it still has a small majority in the House of Commons, so eventually it can get this legislation through.

It is my hope that before this process is over that the government will at least consider doing the following: that it will include in its legislation measures to give some fairness, be it the final offer selection process, a binding arbitration process, or a mediator who will have the opportunity to deal with everything, including salary. There should be something in the bill to give it fairness. There are workers out there, and they were out there earlier today, and they want to go back to work. They cannot afford to be out there now.

[Translation]

Like you and me, these people have financial obligations and they have certain obligations to their families.

Mr. Speaker, these people deserve to be treated fairly by the government opposite.

[English]

At the very least, Mr. Speaker, I think the government should be sincere and forthright and tell us exactly the purpose of the motion that we are debating right now. It is certainly not the passage of it because it is not going to pass. The government knows it because it only requires 10 MPs to defeat it and there are a lot more than 10 of us on this side of the House.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, just beginning where the last member left off. It does seem odd that we are debating a motion which the government knows full well has no chance of passing in this House. At the same time the government claims that it is facing an urgent situation.

I think what is urgent, if anything is urgent at this time, Mr. Speaker, is that the government take cognizance of the fact that a body set up and constituted by this Parliament has ruled against the government, has ruled that the government was not bargaining in good faith, was not in compliance with section 51 of the Public Service Staff Relations Act. What is urgent, Mr. Speaker, is that the government which is given the responsibility of upholding the law of this land is, instead, coming to Parliament at this very moment with a false sense of urgency about ending the strike, when it could end the strike within minutes if it simply decided to comply with the ruling of its own quasi-judicial body, that it go back to the bargaining table and bargain in good faith.

I say to the hon. member for Burlington, who used the phrase "this should not be allowed to happen", I agree, this should not have been allowed to happen. This did not have to happen. This happened because the government allowed it to happen, because the government refused to bargain in good faith, because the government did not do those things that would have permitted a negotiated settlement. Instead, the government has sought to divide Canadians, to turn them against each other.