the normal sense of the term, will not be covered. Nor will members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or persons locally engaged abroad. The bill will not apply to the employees of parliament in respect of whom the government has no authority as an employer. These groups, who might in the broad sense all be thought of as public servants, will constitute the major exceptions from the application of the legislation.

In Canada, legislation to regulate the relationships between employers and organized employees has invariably assigned important powers and responsibilities to independent labour relations boards. The bill which will be placed before the house will propose the establishment of a similar regulatory board. Its duties will include the definition of bargaining units, the certification of bargaining agents, and the investigation of complaints relating to infringement of rights granted by the statute.

Under the federal industrial relations statute bargaining units are determined by the labour relations board upon application of an employee organization seeking certification. The measure to provide for collective bargaining in the public service will propose a similar procedure. In the interests of an orderly change to the bargaining relationship, however, it will normally require that during a transitional period bargaining units should be defined in such a way as to correspond with the occupational groups in the new classification structure.

I should mention at this point that the proposed legislation will make it possible for bargaining rights to be extended progressively to employees in different occupational capacities during a maximum period of two years. It is our hope that organizations representing employees in the operational category, who are engaged in a wide variety of service and maintenance occupations, will be able to seek certification by October 1, 1966.

Under the schedule which we anticipate and which we hope to be able to carry into effect if parliament gives us the authority, and which is designed to carry into bargaining the present pay review cycle, certification will be available on July 1, 1967, to employees in the professional and scientific category and technical category, and on October 1, 1967, to employees in the administrative and administrative support categories.

Under the proposed legislation an employee organization certified as a bargaining unit would enjoy the exclusive right to bargain on behalf of employees in the bargaining unit concerned and to enter into collective agreements on their behalf. The rights that would be gained through certification would be substantial, heralding a significant change in the traditional relationship of employee organizations to the government as employer.

The most difficult problem to be resolved in the regulation of any system of labour relations is the manner in which disputes are to be settled. The dispute settlement provisions of the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act, which are similar to those in most labour relations acts in Canada, permit strikes and walkouts where employees have established a bargaining relationship. However, as hon. members know, such actions are not permitted until a number of conditions have been satisfied.

These normally include negotiation in good faith and, where a dispute develops, its consideration by a conciliation board. Strikes and walkouts are lawful only when the conciliation board has reported and a number of days have elapsed after the report has been received. In other circumstances a strike or walkout is an illegal act and is subject to penalties prescribed by law. Strikes and walkouts are also prohibited during the lifetime of a collective agreement.

• (4:50 p.m.)

In so far as the public service of Canada is concerned, the preparatory committee expressed the view that third party arbitration should be the established method of resolving disputes. It said in effect that strike action as a means of resolving disputes would be inappropriate in the public service but that conditions prevailing at the time would not in its view justify a statutory prohibition of strikes. That was the position taken by the preparatory committee.

The legislation which it is hoped will be introduced makes provision for an arbitration process which conforms in all but one important respect with the recommendation of the preparatory committee. The exception however, is an important one. Hon. members will recall the committee's proposal that the Governor in Council should have authority to set aside an arbitration award in what is considered to be abnormal circumstances. The government has concluded that to follow this proposal would appear to give to the employer an undue advantage. It is perhaps not surprising that employee organizations in the public service have taken a similar view. The