Government Orders

CHILD CARE

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure pursuant to Standing Order 36 to rise and present a petition from constituents of mine who reside in Moncton, Dieppe, Salisbury, and Riverview asking the government to amend the Income Tax Act, so that the child related benefits and deductions for child care are fair and equitable to all family structures based on financial need and irrespective of child care choices.

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● (1210)

[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): I suggest, Madam Speaker, that all questions be allowed to stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall all questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

CANADA LABOUR CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

M. Weiner (for the minister of Labour) moved that Bill C-44, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code (geographic certification), be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Pierre H. Vincent (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I would like to spend a few minutes speaking on third reading so that we can emphasize that what we are doing today, namely an amendment to section 34 of the bill, is a first in Canada. Likewise, the issue that we have to deal with by way of that amendment to section 34 is almost a first in Canada as well. I believe that it is appropriate to stress that fact.

Back in 1973, and it is still true, the object of section 34 was to ensure that marine employers would appoint a representative that would be under a strict obligation to negotiate with the longshoremen. The problems that arose, particularly in the riding of Trois-Rivières, at the Trois-Rivière and Bécancour harbours, have to do with the fact that in the last six years, the longshoremen in Trois-Rivières have not had the opportunity, and I insist on the word opportunity, to negotiate a collective agreement because the employers kept passing the buck to each other through injunctions, temporary, permanent and others, so that there would not be anybody at the table that had the authority or the mandate to negotiate with the employees. I believe it is important to emphasize this while at the same time ensuring that once this bill is passed in this House, the other place, as we like to call it, will give its approval quickly. And, Madam Speaker, I rely on the hon. member for Kenora—Rainy River to send the appropriate message to his colleagues in the other House, so that this bill can be passed quickly. I can tell the hon. member that I will also inform the senators that they must act diligently as regards Bill C-44, which is essential to solve the dispute in Trois-Rivières, and to make sure that the longshoremen, who have been on strike for two months now, can go back to work with a formal collective agreement, which is something they need and have been without for six years.

Madam Speaker, allow me to stress the fact that I am honoured to sponsor this bill which is a concrete achievement by an hon. member for his riding. This is a good example of an issue that had reached gigantic proportions in judicial terms and which, I believe, will be solved with this bill. I also want to emphasize the work of the hon. members for Churchill and Kenora—Rainy River, who co-operated so that we could proceed quickly.

Of course, as you know, Madam Speaker, the House leaders are always involved, and I would like to thank my own House leader and the two others as well, who were very co-operative and agreed to let this bill go through the House a little faster than usual, for economic reasons—the port of Trois-Rivières is strike-bound—and for humanitarian reasons as well. As you know, Madam Speaker, when employees have not had a wage increase for six years and have been on strike for two months, there is a major problem. However, with the support of the House and that of the other place, I hope the federal government will be able to do its share to help them deal with their problems.