

*Oral Questions*

Six and three-quarter years ago in June 1986, the 33rd Parliament, with all-party support, passed the government's Bill C-45 and enacted the Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act, which very simply extended to workers on Parliament Hill the same basic rights to decent working conditions and health and safety laws enjoyed by all other federal employees.

Almost seven years and one election has passed since Royal Assent was given. Still the cabinet has not proclaimed the operative sections of the act, parts II and III, into law. My question is: Will the government proclaim this important basic legislation before the end of this Parliament? Just when will it act to end this obvious and continuing injustice to those who serve us in this place?

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government, we say that it is not really the government that is holding up this issue. This issue deals exclusively with the House of Commons, with employees of the House of Commons and with employees of individual members.

There are certain aspects of the law which would impose on individual members some requirements that there has been some reluctance to take on. The proper forum to discuss this is the Board of Internal Economy. I will certainly relay the hon. member's concerns to the board.

**Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke):** Mr. Speaker, after seven years, I and I am sure the workers of Parliament find that answer absolutely up on cloud nine.

The workers we are talking about not only work directly for members of Parliament but they are all of those employees, some unionized some not, who are employed here for the House of Commons, whether they are security workers, whether they carry out the garbage, whether they cook in the kitchens or whatever else. Surely if there was to be a consultation process, they and any Canadians—who I must admit expect the wheels of government to grind slowly, especially this government's—have a right to expect that it will be less than seven years before consultations are held and something gets done. It is an obvious injustice.

• (1445)

Why has the government not acted at this time? What is the reason? Did it not know what it was doing or does it not know what it is doing now?

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member was rehearsing his supplementary question and did not hear my first answer.

This is not a government question. It is a House of Commons question. There is a distinction. The Board of Internal Economy has the responsibility for this and the hon. member's party has a representative on the Board of Internal Economy. If there was such indignation in the NDP caucus all these years, how come it was never raised by the hon. member's representative?

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[Translation]

**AIRLINE INDUSTRY**

**Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South):** Mr. Speaker, last December, the Minister of Transport promised in the House that he would present a plan in early February to stabilize the airline industry. Today is March 23, and since Canadian International and Air Canada had huge losses in 1992 and Nationair now needs protection from its creditors, is the minister finally prepared to announce measures to stabilize an airline industry that is on the brink?

**Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite will surely recall that I informed the House in November that if the airlines did not impose the self-discipline required to return to profitability, we would intervene by proposing corrective measures in this House.

Since then, the two airlines have announced reductions in their capacity that are likely to improve their situation. We are continuing to examine various options available to correct the situation if the airlines do not continue in the same direction.

[English]

**Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South):** Mr. Speaker, the airline industry has a lot of high quality, high paying jobs that are clearly in jeopardy. It now seems clear that the