

be tolerated either by workers or by all of us on the Hill. The only way to deal with it in a professional and effective way is to have a union agreement and a proper grievance procedure.

I should like to refer to another example. In the cafeteria services an employee cuts his hand on the job. He is told to visit the nurse. The nurse tells him that it is not safe to work and that he should go home. The manager informs the employee that he should go back to work or face discipline. What kind of work situation is that? This is the kind of condition which should not be left to chance or whim. All of us, as well-meaning employers, are working under pressure and perhaps our own needs come before those of the employees.

Let us return to Bill C-45 which is before us. There are many problems with it, and that is why we do not support it. We support negotiated collective bargaining rights for employees. Government Members may not realize how ineffective Bill C-45 is. Many important concerns are not open for negotiation. They are not on the table at all. I should like to refer to some examples of this. Bill C-45 prevents any real negotiation of the classification of positions and assignment of duties.

Turning to the question of staffing, job appointments, appraisals, promotions, demotions, transfers and lay-offs are not negotiable, nor are grievance procedures. Limits are set on what grievances can go to third party arbitration. Union grievances are not allowed. What kind of collective bargaining are we talking about if union grievances are not allowed?

The staff of Members of Parliament are excluded from the right to collective bargaining, a great omission. Also the right to strike is prohibited. I heard my colleague speak about essential services. In any collective bargaining negotiation there is a definition of essential services as a part of the negotiations between employers and employees. It would be worked out as part of the collective bargaining procedure if it were a sound procedure, and the Bill does not offer it. Certification procedures require that all the union cards which have been signed on Parliament Hill be re-signed. This eliminates the kinds of negotiations and certifications under the Canada Labour Code which have already gone forward. We are very disappointed that they have not been implemented.

I should like to elaborate quickly and for the record on some of the negative points in the Bill. First, classification under the Bill would prevent any negotiation on problems related to job descriptions, assignment of pay level and evaluation of duties. The present situation as far as classifications are concerned has evolved over the years, taking into account special characteristics peculiar to the environment of Parliament Hill. I understand that it is the source of a great deal of employee dissatisfaction. As an employer I like to have a collective job classification system in my office, and the criteria set down by the House make it very difficult to have everyone at an equal level of pay. Many employees do not have job descriptions at all. Those employees who have them discover that they are out

*Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act*

of date and frequently and arbitrarily changed in an environment which has seen extensive reorganization and technological change introduced. The result is that employees on the whole are frustrated and insecure, and there is a low level of morale.

Improper classification can also result in significant financial losses for employees. The lack of proper job descriptions hampers efficient operation of the workplace. Under the Canada Labour Code, classification can be negotiated and has been successfully negotiated in many workplaces. We should have the same situation on the Hill. There should be at least a minimum requirement for acceptable legislation, and it is not covered effectively by Bill C-45.

Staffing issues such as job appointments, job appraisals, promotions, demotions, transfers, et cetera, are central to the drive by parliamentary employees to gain bargaining rights. We know that Parliament Hill has a history of staffing decisions which are coloured by political influence, favouritism, nepotism and even administrative incompetence. Parliamentary employees want to have a say in establishing a fair and equitable staffing system based upon merit, length of experience and service. If certified under the Canada Labour Code, employees would have the right to negotiate both staffing and classification. As it stands Bill C-45 is inferior to the Canada Labour Code and to the Public Service Staff Relations Act.

The whole question of grievances is a very important right of employees, especially in this kind of situation and in view of our traditions on Parliament Hill. Bill C-45 does not allow workplace problems to be addressed by union grievances, grievances filed by a group of workers. For example, there are health and safety problems in the print-shop and cafeterias. I remember several years ago hearing complaints about this. Here it is coming up again, particularly about air quality and other environmental problems in the Wellington Building. These cannot be subject to a union grievance. What are workers supposed to do, Mr. Speaker? They have been putting up with bad air for years. Technological change also brings in very negative kinds of habits that are environmental situations, and these cannot be contested by filing a union grievance under this Bill. What use is the Bill if that is the case?

• (1600)

If an item cannot be brought to third party adjudication, the employer is under no requirements to take it seriously. It remains an in-house issue. For example, a poor performance appraisal, demotion or transfer cannot go to adjudication. A grievance cannot go to adjudication. Again, it shows the weakness of this Bill.

What about the right to strike? I know this is a very controversial issue in the minds of some Members of Parliament. Anyone who has studied the tradition of the labour movement, unions and collective bargaining and the results that have come about in improved working conditions,