

*Public Service*

problems that the board has not been able to cope with them.

We dare to hope that with the passing of this bill, the things which it does to the Public Service Staff Relations Board will be a step toward improvements in the relations between management and employees in the public service. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we are happy to support this bill, implementing as it does the unanimous recommendations of the special joint committee.

[Translation]

**Mr. Charles-Eugène Dionne (Kamouraska):** Mr. Speaker, having personally participated in the proceedings of the joint committee where we had an opportunity to hear much evidence I must say we also received a lot of documentation. I think it would be fair to say that we received 200-odd pounds of papers on the various ways of meeting the difficulties that may come up in this area. That documentation also contains a host of suggestions summarized in Bill C-70, the passage of which I commend in the circumstances. An attempt must absolutely be made to get out of that situation which at a certain point paralyzes all economic activity because of decisions often taken on the spur of the moment and causing difficulties that should be circumvented by imaginative legislation.

The bill was referred to committee for further study. Then it will be brought back before the House. At that time we will see the kind of amendments that can be brought in. I also admit that there are a lot of complications in Bill C-70, and that this bill is not within the reach of all workers. I recognize that there is rather complicated terminology and wording in certain paragraphs and inevitably this brings workers to voice grievances arising from bargaining and collective agreements and to call upon lawyers.

I understand that to maintain balance between fair demands, rights and the requirements of the common good is not always an easy thing. However, the labour legislation must pursue that objective with simple wording. Most often I find legislative texts are always too complicated.

If one considers the experience undergone in regrettable situations in labour-management relations, amendments are called for at the earliest possible for the general good of the nation. That is why I am not opposed to this bill, and I hope it will bring good results.

Painstaking workers, a great percentage of whom have a family to maintain, have a right to request some form of happiness for their families, but they should be able to do so without having to resort to strikes, through which they may unknowingly play into the hands of an enemy who uses them to foster subversive interests. We should heed that and watch out for future developments.

Strikes only have the effect of plunging the worker into a vicious circle. He may get a little more, but will he be better off once the impact of the strike will have abated and new taxes will cut down the value of his dollar and prompt him into a new strike? That happens all the time.

I remember an international labour conference in Geneva when the French representative mentioned a number of facts and summed up in a fairly adequate speech the general outlook. He was advocating dialogue.

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

As a matter of fact, the theme of the meeting on that year was "Dialogue".

Here is an excerpt from his speech:

Our planet is going through a period of deep and quick changes appearing on a scale and at a speed up to now unprecedented. Unable to master that evolution, millions of human beings just put up with it and undergo its sometimes dramatic effects. The resulting greater gap in every respect breeds drop outs, generates bitterness and even stirs up wrath. The persistence of selfish attitudes and the intricate interactions of economic schemes make national actions almost inefficient in the light of the planetary dimension of problems to be solved.

He insisted more on dialogue. I know that you need talks to come to an agreement, but the negotiations must be started in time. We must not wait for contracts to have expired for five or six months and sometimes more before renewing them.

In my opinion, the agency provided in Bill C-70 does not go far enough. It should work on the preparation of negotiations, and this is not what I note in this bill, even though I consider that this board will be able to accomplish something practical. The government and the unions often do not speak the same language, especially as concerns the salary policy of the government and the workers. These are terms that many people use without giving them the same definition.

One of the professional afflictions of negotiators, on whatever side of the table they may be sitting, is to constantly go over the old clauses and invent new ones. Both sides of the table quarrel about commas and risk forgetting the basic objective of a collective agreement, which is to humanize relations between employers and employees.

Instead of really trying to guarantee security for everyone, certain agreements become elements of provocation. This is why if the bill contributes by establishing the proposed board to eliminate certain causes of disastrous strikes in the past, I wish that the work on this act will be completed, but I also wish that it will be more understandable for those who will have to work with it.

● (1620)

[English]

**Mr. Lloyd Francis (Ottawa West):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to note the high degree of unanimity expressed by spokesmen in all quarters of the House with regard to the bill before us. As the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) indicated, it incorporates the unanimous recommendations of a committee which has been sitting since last November. This being second reading, my remarks will be directed in general to the principle of the bill, bearing in mind that on referral to the committee it will be possible to consider in detail some of the matters which have been raised, in particular the very small respect in which the bill differs from the recommendations of the committee.

It was in 1967 that the government decided to engage in a bold experiment, introducing collective bargaining into the public service. Since that time a number of areas have been examined and the committee has held a substantial number of public hearings. Many witnesses have been heard. The committee is now in the process of considering in detail a number of matters, including a final report