

are concerned, but our attitude is that at least we have taken the first step. The government has now at least admitted that there is a problem and is trying to do something to overcome it, although only some 850 workers will be affected.

• (1710)

My colleague, the hon. member for Carleton-Charlotte (Mr. McCain)—as a matter of fact, our party—supported the New Democratic Party amendment on which members of the New Democratic Party felt we should not vote. That amendment would have changed the terminology in the bill from “may” to “shall”. Members of the NDP quite rightly argued—as did my colleague, the hon. member for Bow River (Mr. Taylor), in a very clear manner—that “may” should be “shall” once all the conditions are met. We agreed with that. The NDP did not force a vote on that change, but we would have supported the NDP on that proposal.

In closing, I would like to say a couple of kind words about the minister. Not many kind words are spoken about the government these days, and rightfully so. I do not argue about that at all. This government deserves to catch hell, and it is catching it throughout the country. However, when there is a bright light or a little glimmer like this, I think the minister should be congratulated, and I do so. The minister has been flexible. He has listened to the arguments and amended the legislation in certain areas where we felt it necessary, and I thank the minister for that.

The second thing for which I want to thank the minister is that he has seen this bill through. Often ministers disappear. They introduce bills, and someone at the back carries the bills through. I want to thank the minister for staying here and listening to all the representations. I understand and appreciate that at times it can be very boring, but I thank the minister for staying with us.

I want also to thank him for introducing such a bill as this. I hope he will continue to introduce such positive legislation. This is legislation we can get our teeth into and amend to make better. We on this side of the House will support this legislation.

ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*Translation*]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser)—(a) Fisheries—Condition of Atlantic fishing industry. (b) Reported proposal to reduce number of exporters. (c) Pre-budget discussions; the hon. member for Bow River (Mr.

Labour Adjustment Benefits

Taylor)—Agriculture—Cost of fuel used in production of food; the hon. member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson)—Canadian Human Rights Commission—Recommendation concerning sexual harassment of women.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

LABOUR ADJUSTMENT BENEFITS ACT

MEASURE TO ESTABLISH

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Caccia that Bill C-78, to provide for the payment of benefits to laid-off employees and to amend the Canada Labour Code, be read the third time and do pass.

Mr. Sid Parker (Kootenay East-Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on behalf of the New Democratic Party to speak on Bill C-78, which would provide for the payment of benefits to laid-off employees and amend the Canada Labour Code.

I wish to start by saying that the title of the bill is, indeed, a fraud on the Canadian people. It certainly does not indicate the provisions which are in the bill. I think it is wrong that the bill should be entitled “an act to provide for payment of benefits to laid-off employees and to amend the Canada Labour Code” because there are many, many employees who will not qualify and who will not receive benefits under this bill.

Over and over again in committee we asked how many people would receive benefits, but we received no answer. Over and over again we asked how much money would be made available, but we received no answers. The Canadian Labour Congress came before the committee, as did the United Steelworkers of America, the communications workers of Canada, the Council of Regional Development, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the Canadian Construction Association, the ministry of labour of the province of New Brunswick and the Railway Association of Canada. Each of them expressed concerns about the bill and about the number of people who would qualify under it.

Where is the labour critic of the Conservative Party? He knew on Thursday that this bill would come before the House today. Where was the Conservative Party with regard to amendments to this bill? Members of the Conservative Party heard representations time after time. The Canadian Labour Congress called it a death bill. This bill is not a prescription for aid but a prescription for death. Where was the Conservative Party when amendments were put forward to try to improve the bill? We in this party sought amendment after amendment.

Mr. McDermid: We accepted them.