

*Public Service Collective Bargaining*

The proposed measure, if parliament approves it, would require changes in two other important pieces of legislation. It will be necessary to amend the Financial Administration Act in such a way as to provide the Treasury Board with authority in keeping with its responsibility to represent the employer interest in the proposed system of collective bargaining. It will also be necessary to amend the Civil Service Act in such a way as to provide for this allocation of authority and to enable the Civil Service Commission to concentrate on its fundamental task of staffing the service and preserving the merit system of selection and appointment.

● (4:40 p.m.)

The statutory reforms in the administration of the public service which are contemplated in this legislative program are, in the view of the government, no less significant than the reforms instituted by the Civil Service Act of 1918 which in essence constituted the beginning of our civil service as we know it today. It is the government's hope and expectation that the changes which will be brought about by this legislation, if it meets parliamentary approval, will ensure that the public service of Canada in the years to come will have the administrative capacity and flexibility to adjust to the changing demands of the Canadian community which it serves.

It has been, and is now, a civil service unexcelled in any country in the world and equalled by few. I hope that the changes now proposed will help to maintain that proud position.

The reforms contemplated in the proposed legislation owe much to several separate studies and investigations of personnel management in the public service which have been undertaken in the post-war period. I have already referred to the work of the preparatory committee on collective bargaining. I would also like to emphasize the important contributions made by the Royal Commission on Administrative Classifications in the Public Service, under the chairmanship of the present hon. member for Davenport, which reported in 1946; by the Civil Service Commission in its report on personnel administration in the public service, which was published in 1958; and by the Royal Commission on Government Organization, under the chairmanship of Mr. Grant Glassco, which reported in 1962.

The report of the Glassco commission underlined the principle of managerial authority

[Mr. Pearson.]

and responsibility in the administration of the public service. I think that was an important and timely emphasis. In many areas of the public service new administrative processes reflecting this emphasis are now being introduced. When the report of the Royal Commission on Government Organization was first published, that is, the Glassco commission, its stress on managerial authority was seen in some quarters as a threat to the traditional security of civil servants. The proposal to transfer a significant measure of authority from the independent Civil Service Commission to the Treasury Board and to departmental management was regarded at the time with some apprehension by employee organizations and by others.

It was argued that, if much of the traditional protection afforded employees by the involvement of the commission in the determination of pay and the regulation of other conditions of employment were to be removed, employees themselves should be given the right to protect their own interests through appropriate collective bargaining procedures comparable with those available to employees in the private sector of the community. The argument was an impressive and persuasive one, and it has done much to establish the environment in which the new legislation was considered by the government.

In developing this new legislation the government has had certain general objectives in mind: First, to protect the public interest; second, to respond in an understanding and responsible manner to the aims and aspirations of its organized employees; third, to preserve the capacity of the public service to function efficiently in serving the people of Canada and, fourth, to respect the principles underlying industrial relations law and practice in Canada. In their evaluation of proposals made by the government I am sure members of the house will want to keep all these objectives very much in mind.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to address myself for a moment to some of the more important aspects of the policy to be embodied in the legislation which it is proposed, if this resolution carries, to put before parliament.

First, as to its application it is intended that any such legislation should provide a system of collective bargaining for most of the public servants who are not now covered by the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act. Members of the armed forces, however, who are not employees in