

and better bargaining rights to the employees of the House of Commons.

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member told us that before the 1984 election the Liberal Government had ready legislation dealing with this question. I remind him that the Liberals were in government from 1963 to 1984, with the exception of nine months. They were in Government for 20 years. What the Hon. Member is saying is that in the twentieth year they finally got around to drafting legislation. That proves precisely the point which I made, that is, the Liberals take these kinds of questions very seriously only when they are in the Opposition.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to those remarks. The Hon. Member who just posed the question should know that he was talking about 1962 and 1963. I ask him what were the collective bargaining rights of all public servants at that time. Who initiated the process of collective rights for public servants across Canada? It was the Liberal Government. I am glad the Hon. Member raised that subject. It gave me an occasion to correct the record.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) rising on debate or to ask a question?

Mr. Prud'homme: On debate, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, I ask Hon. Members opposite to be cool. I know there is a gentleman's agreement to pass the Bill quickly. If my colleagues opposite are quiet, I will co-operate, but if they want to debate, of course we will not finish tonight. I just wanted to put some comments on record.

Mr. Forrestall: Oh! oh!

Mr. Prud'homme: A third interruption, and I will speak for all the time allotted. I just wanted to be on record as saying that I regret—

Mr. Forrestall: You have no intention of doing anything other than that.

An Hon. Member: Listen to what he has to say.

Mr. Prud'homme: I am used to my very good colleague from Nova Scotia.

I regret that we could not vote on Motion No. 11 which reads in part as follows:

69. Where expenses are incurred in the adjudication of any dispute, provisions similar to those in the *Public Service Staff Relations Act* apply.

[Translation]

I simply want to say that, given the spirit of co-operation, despite the fact that I like and understand all House of Commons employees who all have a personal history, I must

Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act

remember that before I became a Member I was a student and I filled most parliamentary jobs, not here in Parliament but elsewhere in the private sector. So I am aware of the kind of respect we owe our employees be they in kitchens or in offices. I had an amendment ready, I will not move it but I simply want to say that I had drafted this amendment: That Bill C-45 be not now read for the third time but that it be referred to a Legislative Committee for reconsideration of Clause 69.

This would mean we would pay the expenses incurred in adjudication cases rather than force the employees to pay them. The more Members say so, the more numerous opportunities we will have to get back to this question. If ever the occasion were to arise we might say: Listen, the spirit which prevailed the evening of June 25 when we agreed to pass this Bill, the spirit was that there would be no abuse. I certainly would not want the House of Commons to behave like a private sector company, use strong tactics, turn down certain requests and say: If you are not happy, try arbitration. Then we know full well that the House of Commons which represents all Canadians has unlimited resources, unlimited resources to fight, so it would be very unfair to pit our House of Commons employees against Parliament which obviously has unlimited financial resources and might tell them: Well, we will call in an arbitrator, we will pay our expenses, but pay you your own.

I simply want to be sure that such abuses will not occur, and as I said at the beginning, the best way would have been to pass this amendment earlier this evening, but it was defeated. We could move a motion asking that this Bill be not now read and be referred back to the Legislative Committee for review of this clause. However, this seems impossible. The result of the vote would be the same as a few hours ago. I prefer co-operation, and as a Member who likes to co-operate, since the Government wants to pass this Bill as quickly as possible, I and my colleagues have decided that it is useless to fight as the results will be the same. I will therefore not move this amendment to refer the Bill to the Legislative Committee to consider what we believe to be an important amendment.

I shall therefore conclude by saying that we still hope that what the Government is offering will represent a beginning for Parliament employees, but as I have already mentioned, I would have preferred, that several of the amendments moved by my colleague be accepted in a spirit of co-operation. I consider it my duty to speak as Chairman of the Committee on Members's Services. Who provides these services to Members? The employees of the House of Commons. I felt that I should at least say that I regret that we could not—

● (2120)

[English]

As they say in English, we would not have gone all the way. I regret it, but I see there is no use insisting, so I will not insist.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.