

Statutory Holidays

observance? I feel strongly that it is a mistake to pass this measure over lightly. True enough our people need holidays and need rest; we all do. But I am sure that the working people of Canada, if given a chance to consider seriously the effect upon those who will come after us of throwing into the discard these two national holidays, would strongly urge us to raise our voices against such a procedure. I ask members of the house to consider the matter very carefully before they support the bill.

Mr. Pouliot: I am in favour of the bill because I am in favour of long week ends. The hon. member for Hamilton West has spoken about the observance of national holidays by school children. I agree with her so far as Victoria day is concerned. There should be a panegyric of Queen Victoria on that day in all schools in order that the school children may know that there was a queen of England who had a very long reign during which there were very few wars, with the exception of the South African war, and that the world at large was at peace during her reign.

As the hon. member for Hamilton West probably knows, the school year ends about the middle of June. Since Dominion day is on July 1, the children will have been out of school for two weeks before that day is celebrated. I wonder if it is her intention to suggest that the boys and girls should be brought back and the schools reopened just for that day, or that the holidays of the children should be shortened by two weeks.

Mrs. Fairclough: If the hon. member had been listening he would have realized that I said nothing whatever about observing July 1 in the schools. I am quite well aware of the point he had just mentioned, but when referring to the schools I mentioned only May 23.

Mr. Pouliot: I do not want to make it absurd, and I do not want the hon. member to take it in the wrong way. Although she is a woman, she chose to run for parliament and here she must understand that while there are many men, they are friendly toward her and mean well when they ask questions.

Mrs. Fairclough: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Pouliot: I want the hon. member to keep quiet. I have said nothing out of order and I want her to keep quiet while I am speaking.

The Chairman: The hon member is raising a point of order.

Mr. Pouliot: We are all alike.

Mrs. Fairclough: As all hon. members of this house should know very well, I have not asked nor do I ask for favours of any kind.

Mr. Pouliot: Well, Mr. Chairman, the female of the species is deadlier than the male. We are here to discuss the question of a long holiday or rather two long holidays, one during the school year and one after it. The hon. member may establish subtle distinctions after she is through, but she did not make that distinction in her speech.

Mrs. Fairclough: You are wrong.

Mr. Pouliot: If she did it was in a manner that could not be understood by any of her colleagues.

Mrs. Fairclough: You should listen.

Mr. Pouliot: I sat very quietly listening to the hon. member to see if she got the point, but she discovered it only after I had pointed it out to her. She may find it unpleasant, but she chose to run for this house and she must listen to me.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Pouliot: I wonder why the Tories are so touchy. They are touchier than their lady colleague, and I do not want them to frown like that; they may frighten us. I use the language of a gentleman, but I believe in freedom of speech and no hon. member will prevent me from saying what I have to say in this house in accordance with the rules and traditions of parliamentary life. Some people seem to have no humour at times. Well, it is no sin not to have a sense of humour, but they must understand that when they differ with someone there may be that little touch of something which may arouse their feelings, with no offence meant.

To sum up, sir, the hon. member sponsoring this bill should be congratulated. He must not be discouraged because the fairest of all of us disagreed with him on one point, although I have reduced that now to one-half a point. At first the discussion had to do with two long week ends; now it appears that only one-half his suggestion should not be accepted. I may tell the hon. member for Hamilton West that in her city, as in my own and in all constituencies, Dominion day is celebrated by all families. The feeling of the Canadian people on that occasion is one of patriotism and pride in our country. Whether the schools are open or closed there is no Canadian who does not feel on that day that he must be prouder than ever of being a Canadian citizen.

Mr. Graydon: There is one aspect of the clause which perhaps could be improved by an amendment. I was not in the chamber,