

organizing the leisure of the Canadian people, who, may be, will want to specialize in the field of research, in order to further develop our country and the rest of the world.

● (5:40 p.m.)

Of course, the purpose of the bill is readily understood, since the title is as follows:

An Act to amend the Canada Labour (Standards) Code (Three Weeks Annual Vacation after Three Years).

Theoretically, this is a very good thing, but a hasty application of this measure would probably result in numerous complications.

At present, under the Canada Labour Code, if I am not mistaken an employer is required to grant an employee two weeks vacation with pay after a year of employment.

I think it is necessary to add, and I emphasize the fact, that eight days of vacation with pay, eight statutory holidays, are granted anyway according to the Labour Code, over those two weeks vacation.

The honourable member for Winnipeg North Centre, as I said earlier—if my memory serves me right—always shows a great deal of perseverance and consistency in his views. I think that we can congratulate him for this positive approach which he has always cultivated and which can be rated among his good intellectual habits.

In fact, we can notice that the sponsor of this bill already introduced a similar bill in April 1965. He also introduced one in 1964 when he suggested that a three weeks annual vacation with pay should be granted to an employee after five years of employment with the same employer and I notice that, at the outset of the debate, the honourable member for Halifax recalled the basic principles which had been used when preparing the Canada Labour Code.

The code was based on the principle whereby it was important to set up minimum standards because it could be dangerous for the balance of our industry to aim towards standards setting up too high maximums. In order to adopt such measures, in spite of the good intentions of those who wished to introduce them, we are still convinced that several years of research or experience are necessary.

I have opposed the opinion formerly expressed by the member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette) when he said that by implementing such a measure overnight once again the consumer would foot the bill, once again mothers and small wage earners would suffer heavy

deprivations. The honourable member mentioned also the financial difficulties the adoption of this act could mean for small Canadian industrialists and businessmen.

The standards proposed by the bill stipulate a three-week holiday after three years of employment. Those standards outdistance by far present practice in industry, not only that which falls within federal jurisdiction, but industry in general. Looking at working conditions in the Canadian industry in 1964, as reported in a publication of the Department of Labour, and in the industries that fall within federal jurisdiction, we note that this practice is far from a minimum and far from general. Instead of generalizing it, a study should be made of the evolution through the years.

We then see that only 12 per cent of the employees, other than office personnel, have three weeks off after less than 10 years of employment. Of all employees, office and others,—of which there were 2,500,000—15 per cent only had a three-week holiday after less than 10 years of service. Granting three weeks of holidays after relatively short periods of service was far more general amongst office personnel, perhaps because of the more sedentary nature of the work. Numerous other statistics could show us how complicated it would be to apply this legislative measure immediately. Looking at figures, for instance, in the article "Vacations with pay 1964, all industries", we note that:

● (5:50 p.m.)

[English]

Total number of reporting units, non office employees, 19,057. Office employees, 19,267.

[Translation]

The number of those who enjoy a three weeks annual vacation with pay, after less than ten years of service, amounts to 15 per cent while for the office workers, the proportion is only of 26 per cent. After ten years of employment, for the non-office employees, the proportion is 22 per cent compared with 26 per cent for the office employees.

It is clear that for most businesses which give three weeks annual vacation or more to employees with several years of service, the length of service is much more than three years.

It would be advisable also, I think, after a study of what happens in practice with regard to vacation in the industry and businesses in general, to study the policy followed by the provinces.