

EVIDENCE

TUESDAY, March 5, 1957.
11.00 a.m.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. L. Gauthier, (*Nickel Belt*)): At the last meeting you will recall that the Industrial Relations Committee had postponed its hearing until the middle of March. Now, other legislation has been presented in the form of a bill by the Minister of Labour, and a special meeting, I presume, has been called to answer such questions as apply to that bill. I think it would be proper at this time to ask the Minister to give an explanation of the bill in question; then we may discuss it.

Hon. Mr. GREGG: I do not think there is very much I need to add at this juncture to the explanation that I gave in the house on second reading. The bill is designed, of course, to bring the benefits of this federal legislation up to and in line with the better terms in the provinces. We have not amended it, perhaps, as often as the provinces have, and consequently we have made a fairly large jump in some of the benefits outlined here. I should like to say that the few points that were made in debate on second reading have been noted by my officers and myself, and when we come to the proper parts of the bill we will be glad to discuss them.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Shall we proceed with the bill, now, Bill No. 178, An Act to amend the Merchant Seamen Compensation Act. Let us get on with clause 1.

Mrs. FAIRCLOUGH: May I ask the minister to explain what board has the responsibility for the administration of this act?

Hon. Mr. GREGG: It is a board composed of public servants. Will you name them, Mr. Brown?

Mr. A. H. BROWN (*Deputy Minister of Labour*): They are appointed by the governor in council, and I am the chairman of the board. Mr. Bennett Roberts, chairman of the National Harbours Board is the second member of the board and Captain G. L. C. Johnson of the Department of Transport is the third member.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions on that?

Mr. BARNETT: I wonder if we could have the number of cases that come to the board in the course of a year, some idea of the size of the money payments involved and the number of people on compensation of one kind or another?

Hon. Mr. GREGG: Mr. Greene, who administers the act under the board, may say something on that.

Mr. GEORGE G. GREENE (*Secretary, Merchant Seamen Compensation Board*): There have been, as the minister said in the House, 824 accidents to seamen covered by this act since August, 1945. In about 600 of these cases they were just temporary, disabilities for a short period of time. Now we have here 85 cases of permanent disability where the disability was not higher than 10 per cent of the capacity to earn, and so the board awarded in these 85 cases lump sums of money based on the value of the disability, over the rest of their lives. That is the usual way it is done. We had 15 cases where monthly awards were made, and these are the cases where the disability would be more than 10 per cent. They have been getting varying amounts \$20, \$30 a month and