

*Industrial Relations*

reason of their duties, belong in some way to the maintenance personnel, agree that they cannot qualify under this clause.

Therefore smaller industries that need all their capital, should not be compelled to make this extraordinary expenditure which might lead them to bankruptcy.

Referring to statistics, we find that this legislation is not as important as the previous speaker would have us believe. In fact, we find that paid statutory holidays are granted to the majority of employees under federal jurisdiction. For example, as far as air transportation is concerned, 81.7 per cent of employees already enjoy at least eight paid holidays per annum. As for road transportation, 79.1 per cent out of 10,593 workers who are not office employees have at least eight holidays with pay. Canadian National and Canadian Pacific employees also are sure to have at least seven holidays with pay per annum. Among public service employees, 94 per cent who are not office employees also have eight or more holidays with pay per annum.

In the light of all these facts, Mr. Speaker, although I am in full agreement with the principle of the bill, I feel obliged to urge my colleagues in this house to consider the measure carefully before passing it.

**Mr. J. J. Martel (Chapleau):** Mr. Speaker, I want to add a few remarks to the words just spoken by my good friend, the hon. member for St. Hyacinthe-Bagot (Mr. Ricard). I support what he just stated and I must say that I too support the principle of this bill. However, I am not quite certain that this legislation provides adequate remuneration for employees who are called upon to work on statutory holidays. I am in favour of at least double time being paid to employees who have to work on statutory holidays, but I also believe that we should remain within reasonable limits.

If we want to be realistic, as the mover of this bill said a few moments ago, we should also consider what might happen to the owner of a small business—and the hon. member for St. Hyacinthe-Bagot also stressed the fact—as well as to the employees throughout this country, if such legislation were immediately passed without being more fully considered or without some amendments thereto, or at least one change, which I believe, is absolutely necessary.

Mr. Speaker, if we abide by the principle outlined in the statement which has been made on this bill, what will happen to persons who have to work on Sundays and statutory holidays, like doctors, hospital employees, male and female nurses, technicians,

employees of public utilities, of municipal waterworks, fire departments and snow removal services in the winter time?

Would not people assigned to those various services be also entitled to claim three times their regular fees, salaries or wages? I feel we must, all the same, stay within the limits of common sense and be reasonable.

I also know that most people who are required to work on religious holidays and on statutory holidays can exchange those days with fellow-workers, with the consent of their employers, as is the practice in most cases.

I have no doubt that at the present time, an employee who is called upon to work on a holiday or Sunday should be paid double time, since such statutory holidays as Sundays and ordinary holidays are above all days of rest. Furthermore, it is agreed that if a man is called upon to work at an essential service, he is entitled to increased remuneration.

However, if I correctly understood the statement made by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Regier) concerning his bill, he suggests, in other words, that any person who has to work on statutory holidays should get a salary equivalent to double the salary rate, in addition to his regular salary, which would triple his salary.

There is no doubt that a double remuneration should be paid for any work performed on certain such days, but as I pointed out a moment ago, what would the public say if workers employed at essential public services, or again doctors, nurses, druggists or hospital employees should demand, in addition to their regular salaries or fees, a double remuneration? I am convinced that this idea would hardly be received with favour by the public in general and, besides, I do not believe that it is the objective contemplated by the hon. member's bill. I suppose he rather meant to say that double time should be granted to employees having to work on statutory holidays.

I now come to the question touched upon a moment ago by the mover of the bill, and that is the matter of increasing the number of statutory holidays to an average of one a month or twelve a year. With regard to this question, in the province of Quebec, as was pointed out a while ago by the hon. member for St. Hyacinthe-Bagot, a provincial statute provides for the payment of a salary to provincial employees on certain holidays which are not necessarily statutory holidays throughout the country. On that score, moreover, many will no doubt recall the judgment handed down by the Supreme