

Japanese parliamentarians call on PM, Senate and Commons Speakers



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A delegation of parliamentarians from the Japanese Diet led by immediate past Speaker of the House of Representatives Shigesaburo Maeo and Chairman of the Japan/Canada Parliamentarians League, visited Canada July 7-15. The delegation met with Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, Speaker of the Senate Renaude Lapointe, and Speaker of the House of Commons James A. Jerome, and presented to the Parliament of Canada a collection of books on Japan. The visit and the presentation of the books reflected the growing contact that has been established between our two Parliaments. Seen in the photograph taken during a call on the Prime Minister on July 13 are (left to right): Yasuhiko Nara (Japanese Ambassador to Canada), Minoru Yoda (New Liberal Club), the Prime Minister, Shigesaburo Maeo (Liberal Democratic Party), Kichiro Tazawa (Liberal Democratic Party), Shigetaro Sasayama (Liberal Democratic Party) and Sanae Miyata (Democratic Socialist Party).

Labour code amended

Labour Minister John Munro recently announced the coming-into-effect of Bill C-8, the omnibus bill amending the Canada Labour Code. The bill was passed by the House of Commons in April.

The Canada Labour Code applies to some 560,000 persons in the federal jurisdiction in areas such as air transport, banking, broadcasting, railways, shipping, grain elevators, highway transport and pipelines.

Parts of the Code that took effect June 1 include provisions covering areas such as hours of work, paid vacations and the compressed work-week. There is an increase in the number of statutory holidays from eight to nine; there are new bereavement leave provisions; pregnancy as a cause for dismissal has been eliminated; and employers are now obliged to

notify the nearest police authority whenever a person threatens to endanger the safety or health of his/her employees.

Additional provisions:

- require unions to furnish members with financial statements;
- give the Canada Labour Relations Board (CLRB) more discretion to order representation votes and related run-off votes;
- remove administrative obstacles to certification of councils of trade unions, to facilitate the creation of broader-based bargaining units;
- require that unions fairly represent members of the bargaining unit;
- ensure fair and objective referral procedures by union hiring halls;
- authorize the CLRB to establish the terms of a first agreement, on referral from the minister.

Other amendments, including a provi-

Safeguards for DNA research

Health and Welfare Minister Monique Bégin and Minister of State for Science and Technology Judd Buchanan say the Government will, after consultations with the provinces, establish procedures to protect against the potential hazards of recombinant DNA research.

DNA, deoxyribonucleic acid, controls the reproduction, function and growth of all living cells. Recombinant DNA is created by adding DNA elements from one organism to the DNA of a second organism which then reproduces the properties controlled by the combined DNA.

The techniques could facilitate rapid advances in genetic and medical science, and could have numerous practical applications such as the creation of bacteria to produce insulin and other important chemicals.

However, since concern has been expressed that this research may result in harmful microorganisms, certain protective measures are still considered to be necessary.

In February 1977, MRC, the agency responsible for funding medical and health-related research, announced guidelines similar to those adopted in the U.S. and Britain and recently by the National Research Council, which its recipients must follow in recombinant DNA research.

The guidelines classify different types of experiments by the degree of risk involved, and require the use of special laboratory equipment and procedures.

No recombinant DNA research was conducted in Canada prior to establishment of the MRC guidelines, but it is expected that ten to 15 projects will be under way in Canadian universities within the next year. All will be funded by agencies requiring adherence to the guidelines; all are in the low-to-medium-risk category.

The guidelines demand compulsory compliance from industry and all other non-federally-funded organizations.

tion dealing with the appointment of arbitrators, came into effect July 1, and the remainder, dealing with sick leave, regular payment of wages, protection for workers against unjust dismissal, the right of workers to refuse to work under conditions of imminent danger and the creation of health and safety committees, become effective September 1.