

Hon. Mr. Paterson: Is it the intention to refer this bill to committee? This is quite a complicated matter, and unless the Shipping Federation and the vessel owners had a chance to have their say, it would be unfair to pass this legislation without their knowing what it involves. Is it your intention to refer it to committee?

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): I am in the hands of the Senate. I have no objection to it going to committee. I am glad to do whatever the Senate desires, but I would say that generally speaking this bill is beneficial not only to the worker but to the shipping company. It removes an inequity that could conceivably be a disadvantage to both.

I think Senator O'Leary (Carleton) had a question.

Hon. Mr. O'Leary (Carleton): I would like to ask who will do the apportioning as between the various people liable for the annual vacation?

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): I think this would result from the reports on employment which are submitted by the various shipping companies. I have examples of them here.

To take a practical example, suppose I am a stevedore, and I work ten days for X steamship company and 20 days for Y steamship company, and so on. There would be a record kept by each company, and, in fact, I would keep my own record. Let us say, for the sake of argument, that I work for five different shipping companies during the course of the year. In that case I would say that the responsibility for my vacation would be equally apportioned between those five shipping companies for which I worked.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Branford): I think Senator O'Leary (Carleton) asked the question I was going to ask. Who actually makes the apportionment? Is there a central office to which these reports go?

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): Yes. As I conceive the situation, the regulations would provide that there be an officer of the Department of Labour who would administer them, and if there is any difficulty about the amount of the apportionment as between the companies, then representations could be made by the companies concerned as well as by the employee.

Hon. Mr. Fournier (De Lanaudière): May I be permitted a question? What happens if a

stevedore takes no vacation at all, and works all the year through?

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): In that case he is entitled to pay in lieu of time off, as is provided for in the act. In any event, it would be apportioned among his employers in the same way as it is done in other industries under federal jurisdiction.

Hon. Fred M. Blois: I think I heard the honourable Leader of the Government (Hon. Mr. Connolly, Ottawa West) say that it is possible for these men to work for 50 or 60 different companies during the year. If that is so I am wondering why it is so important that this bill be passed today. If there are so many companies involved then perhaps they should be given the opportunity of studying this bill and coming before a committee of the Senate in order to present their views. We are noted here for giving everybody an opportunity to be heard. The honourable Leader of the Government gave an example of a stevedore working for five or six companies, but it is possible that he could work for 50 companies in a year.

This bill seems to be very cumbersome. I am not opposed to it, but I have not read it and I do not understand it. Perhaps there are other honourable senators who do not understand it either. I do not think it should be hurried through.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): If the bill seems to be complicated then that is because I have made it appear so.

Let me say quite frankly that there is a strike on the west coast at this time. There has been considerable labour unrest. One of the points of grievance is a situation which this bill seeks to correct. I have no intention of urging the Senate not to send this bill to a committee, but we thought we were sitting for today only, and I am thinking of our colleagues who, because travel arrangements are difficult, found it impossible to arrive here in time today.

Would the Senate give consideration to sending this bill to a committee this evening, and hearing the Minister and his officials? If the committee is not satisfied with the explanations given, then we can resume our sitting in the house, and adjourn the debate. I would be perfectly happy to move that this bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce, which could sit at eight o'clock this evening to hear the minister and his officials. I am sure they will be able to throw much more light on it than I have been