

labour that a minimum vacation with pay will be recognized in this country for those employees engaged in federal works, undertakings and businesses.

Hon. Mr. Wall: I recognize the fact that this is giving legal recognition to a right, and that it will be made a statutory right, but what I want to know is this. There must be a purpose to this legislation which is being introduced at the present time. It must meet certain conditions that are considered to exist, and all I want to have established is the extent to which this legislation will meet a real need.

Hon. Mr. Brunt: I have been unable to find any real or pressing need for it, but I think the feeling of those interested in helping labour is to make sure that at least those employed on federal works will be assured of a minimum holiday with pay.

Hon. A. K. Hugessen: Honourable senators, it seems to me that this bill is a refreshing relief from the kind of bills we have been dealing with during most of this session. In view of an immediate general election they have amounted to nothing more than a hand-out to this, that or the other person.

I would like to follow up the questions raised by the honourable the junior senator from Winnipeg (Hon. Mr. Wall). Apparently the sponsor of the bill cannot say "Yes" or "No" as to whether this legislation will in fact benefit any single one of the employees concerned. Now, will the measure improve the position of any of the employees who come under the designations? I would say, on the basis of my limited knowledge, that a very large number of the employees purported to be covered by this bill are already covered by collective bargaining agreements which give them either the same or better rights than they would be given under this legislation. So the purport of the question is really this: Will this bill, in fact, benefit any single individual or is it merely eyewash?

Hon. Arthur W. Roebuck: I would not call it eyewash. It is a gesture, that is all, and it is a good gesture.

Hon. Mr. Farris: It comes at an opportune time.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Yes, a politically opportune time. The enactment is restricted, as the Constitution provides, to those industries which are under dominion control. That principle was settled by the Privy Council in 1936 in the constitutional appeals with regard to the Hours of Labour Act. The judgment clearly indicated that the dominion Government may legislate with regard to hours of labour within its own jurisdiction but not

within provincial jurisdiction. In my opinion the bill is constitutional and harmless.

The sponsor of the bill (Hon. Mr. Brunt) said that I would no doubt agree with the principle involved in it, and I do. I frequently take exception to principles involved in legislation, but I am very satisfied to approve legislation when I think the principle of it is right. It is right in this instance.

The idea of giving the labourer a certain time for recuperation is very old. The Sabbath is a very well-established institution; it is economic, and it is salutary, and, as time has gone by, we have discovered that the one day's rest in the week is not enough, that the human being requires time off in order to prepare himself for the coming year. Two weeks' holidays after two years is little enough. For my own part, that is what I have enjoyed for many years, and now I hope I can take even more time off than that.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: You do not have the eight-hour day or the five-day week.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: No, I don't, and I require more time off for that reason. They do say, you know, that the man most in need of a rest is he who comes home from a holiday.

Honourable senators, I approve completely the principle of the bill. The honourable senator from Inkerman (Hon. Mr. Hugessen) raised a real point about it, as did also the honourable senator from Winnipeg (Hon. Mr. Wall), when they asked how many people would be advantageously affected. I have no statistics on the matter, but I have some personal knowledge in connection with these industries under dominion control, and it is my thought that there will be very, very few benefited by this measure; it may be that nobody will benefit by it. That, however, is not a sound objection to the bill. If anyone is affected, I hope he will get the benefit, and I am ready to help him do so. I think the bill will be of little value in actual practice. As I have said, it is a gesture by a government going to the country and appearing to give something, while in fact it gives nothing, or next to nothing.

I congratulate the sponsor on his excellent explanation of the bill, and I shall vote for the measure.

The motion was agreed to, and the bill was read the second time.

THIRD READING POSTPONED

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

Hon. Mr. Brunt: I move that the bill be read the third time now.