

Labour Conditions

but whatever the reasons or excuses may be I do not believe they are valid.

I do not think the government should exclude from the provisions of the bill now before us a group of people who are under the jurisdiction of the federal government. I think the federal government has a responsibility and duty to cover these people.

Mr. Nielsen: All Canadians.

Mr. Orlikow: And all Canadians but, of course, that raises the question of the divided jurisdiction in the field of labour between the federal and provincial governments. I do not want to discuss now what can be done about this over the long term but I do suggest to the government that they should not shirk their responsibility and duty in respect of the people of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

There is one more point which I think we need to have explained. While the bill covers all employees who come under federal jurisdiction, certain clauses give the minister the right to grant exemptions and to set lower rates. In addition the bill provides for lower rates to be permitted under the regulations, which I presume will be drafted after the bill is passed. It seems to me we should have some indication from the minister of the kind of exemptions he might consider granting. I would hope there would be as few exemptions as possible; in fact, I would hope there would be none. But it does seem to me, Mr. Speaker, that there are now a large number of employees covered by federal legislation who will be in a difficult situation in the period of transition.

I am thinking, for example, of certain railway employees. The sleeping, dining and parlour car employees of the railways, under the collective agreement under which they work for the railway companies, are working a basic 208 hours per month for a monthly salary. This agreement was signed after negotiations between their union and the railway companies. Now, Mr. Speaker, the wage of a railway porter, for example, is \$334.08 per month for a 208 hour month. This works out at \$1.61 per hour, which is substantially more than the minimum wage set by this bill.

However, Mr. Speaker, since this bill only provides for a 40 hour week with overtime pay on time and a half basis for 8 hours more per week, this means that unless the railways are given exemption from this provision for these employees, their monthly working hours would have to be reduced by 34. If their pay were reduced by that number of hours at

\$1.61 per hour it would mean a reduction in pay of \$54 per month. If this measure is applied to these employees, and I think it should apply to all employees, it seems to me it should contain a provision to the effect that there should be no reduction in the take home pay of any workers as a result of the implementation of this bill. In the case which I have used as an illustration, the annual rate of pay for these people works out to just over \$4,000. If the hours worked are reduced to the maximum of 48 per week as provided for by the bill, their take home pay would be reduced to \$3,350 a year. This is a rather substantial reduction for any person to suffer. However it seems to me that this question ought to be considered by the minister before we complete the clause by clause consideration of the bill.

I join with all members of this house, I think, who have welcomed the introduction of this bill. Those of us who have had experience in labour matters know that no matter how good the provisions of a bill may look on paper, they are not of much use unless the enforcement of them is taken seriously by the government. Unless this measure is policed, and unless the employees concerned are informed publicly of the rights which they have, the measure will not be of much value. It seems to me that before we complete our study of this bill we ought to hear from the minister in some considerable detail as to how his department intends to administer it, how it intends to enforce the provisions of the bill which, in principle, have been greeted favourably by the members of the house.

Mr. Cantelon: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. It is a question of privilege which concerns many thousands of veterans of the two wars who risked their lives for this country and, in particular, it is a question of privilege that relates to the thousands who paid the supreme sacrifice. It is disgraceful that in the holidays provided by clause 2, paragraph (f), Remembrance day is not listed. The veterans must consider earnestly—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order; I am wondering if the hon. member does not feel that his point of privilege, since it refers specifically to a clause in the bill, should be brought up when we are considering the individual clauses of the bill. As the hon. member well knows, on second reading we can only consider the principle of the bill and we cannot discuss the separate clauses. I suggest to the hon. member that the point he seeks to make