

Vacation Leave Bill

there is nothing to prevent the negotiation of longer paid holidays by collective bargaining between union and management or between an individual employee and employer in cases where there is not a union.

A great number of collective bargaining agreements provide for three weeks and longer vacation periods, but very few have obtained them for three years employment or less. I suspect the reason for this is that the unions themselves do not generally believe it is reasonable to ask for three weeks vacation after only three years of employment, and so they press for matters which they feel will be considered more reasonable, namely, increased wages, better working conditions, more attractive pension plans, etc.

In the debate on a similar bill in March 1967, referred to previously, the hon. member for Egmont (Mr. MacDonald) who represented the former riding of Prince at that time, spoke quite clearly on the need for longer vacations because of the ever-increasing pressures of modern life on the family unit. However, he went on to discuss the problems of longer periods of leisure for most people who have not learned to use their leisure creatively.

I certainly hope and expect that we will be able to keep increasing the minimum length of paid vacations by amending existing federal labour legislation from time to time and that in the meantime the federal government and all levels of government will encourage and actively support various types of programs that will enable people of all ages to learn to use their leisure time more happily and effectively.

In conclusion I would like to say that a three week annual vacation with pay for a relatively short term of employment is on the horizon and will be commonly accepted within a few years. However, for present economic reasons the bill before us this afternoon is a little premature.

Mr. Jerry Pringle (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to congratulate the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) for his Bill C-14. It seems to me that the federal labour code is continually being shortcircuited by collective bargaining and by labour unions negotiating the basis of contracts and fringe benefits in various parts of the country, and that we have found it less necessary to amend the labour code in order to provide definite guidelines or laws with respect to the length of vacations that we think our people should have. On the one

hand we co-operate with the labour unions through our manpower and labour departments. We try to work in co-operation with them so that they can institute collective bargaining and handle the vacation and pay aspects. On the other hand it is being suggested that we should establish just what these should be by providing three weeks vacation after three years of service.

I presume it would be somewhat dangerous for me to say that employees should not have three weeks vacation, and I will not say it. However, I am concerned about vacations which become periods of moonlighting. While I agree with my good friend, the hon. member for London East (Mr. Turner), I must say that if people definitely went on vacations I believe it would be of great assistance to the Canadian economy. One of the problems I have noticed over the years, especially in recent years when people have had so much spare time anyway, unless they happen to be members of parliament, is that a great deal of moonlighting is taking place in people's spare time. This creates a problem.

It is my belief that we should endeavour to increase productivity so as to reduce the inflation which is confronting us at present and in this way earn a three weeks vacation which can then be taken and enjoyed. I firmly believe, as does the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, that people are entitled to this holiday and should have it. I may say that I am a little confused by the proposed section 16 which reads in part as follows:

—provided however that every employee who has had three years of continuous employment by one employer is entitled to and shall be granted a vacation with vacation pay of at least three weeks.

I wonder if this could be explained for my benefit because it seems to me it should read: "shall be granted a vacation with pay or vacation pay of at least three weeks." In other words, I do not believe it is required in the labour code that if a person received a vacation he should also receive vacation pay. In this case it would have to be 6 per cent, as I understand it, over and above the regular pay he would get when taking a vacation.

● (5:30 p.m.)

There is a great deal of work to be done in Canada in cementing relations between labour and management. Labour organizations must accept responsibility as soon as possible for taking a fearless look at the problem of productivity. At the same time, they must receive our support in seeing to it that