

good deal, and perhaps there is much to be said in favour of giving them a slight extension of time before bringing the Act into operation. But the honourable gentleman from Toronto dropped one remark which confirmed my opinion that it would not be safe to leave the matter open. The honourable gentleman spoke as though the Government would probably not think it well to put this Act into operation until after the close of the war. Now, honourable gentlemen, we do not know when the war will end, and we do not know whether this benevolent Government will be in power then or not; therefore the proposal of the honourable gentleman from Toronto, if carried out, might mean an indefinite postponement of what everybody admits is a step in the right direction. I gathered from the professional gentlemen who represented the companies before the committee that they did not seriously object to the system of bi-monthly payment, and if the honourable gentleman from Welland (Hon. Mr. Robertson) will agree to substitute the "1st of January, 1918," for the "1st of October, 1917," he probably will get an almost unanimous vote of the House.

Hon. Mr. BOYER: I listened with a great deal of interest to the remarks of my honourable friend from Toronto (Hon. Mr. Nicholls), but I must say that his argument failed to convince me. He told us that the railway men had got an increase in pay. Well, if the companies can afford to give their men an increase under the present critical conditions, what is to prevent them paying them fortnightly? We are told that the railway companies have applied to the Railway Board for authority to increase freight rates. If that increase is granted and the Bill remains in suspense, have we any assurance that the railroads will avail themselves of this expression of opinion and give the men their pay fortnightly? I must confess that I have doubts. Our honourable friend from Victoria (Hon. Mr. Cloran) told us that we were only thirty-five years of age. Well, suppose we are. I remember the days when all the large corporations paid their dividends every six months. What is the modern tendency? It is to pay dividends quarterly. When this change was made there was not a protest against it; on the contrary, a shout of joy went up from all the shareholders. It was a convenience to everybody. When you see such large corporations as the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, and the United States Steel Corporation,

with a capital of \$1,800,000,000, paying their dividends every three months, there must be something in it. I remember when in the city of Montreal we paid our gas bills every three months. The Company gradually changed their policy and required the bills to be paid monthly. At first there was a protest; we were accustomed to the old system; but the Company, as the reason for the change, said that the monthly payment of cash was a great convenience to them, helping them to finance, and asked the consumers to conform to it, which they did, and to-day everything works smoothly. Now, what is the position of a man who gets his wages once a month? He has to go to his landlord and say: "I have had sickness in my family, I have the rent to pay, I have the grocer to pay, I have the water bill to pay; will you be kind enough to allow me a little delay?" If the men received their wages once a fortnight, it would help them, and, after all, no one knows what they want better than they do themselves.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE: Those of us who are not now in a position to vote on this question never will be. In the committee I proposed fixing the 1st of January as the date when the Bill should go into force. This proposal was defeated by only one vote. From a conversation which I had with the promoter of the Bill, I think he would not object to the 1st of January being set as the date for the Bill to go into force. We must fix a day; it is better for all concerned. If my honourable friend will accept the change to the 1st of January, no doubt the Bill will go through.

Hon. Mr. CROSBY: I rise with some diffidence to speak in this Chamber, but, in view of the importance of the Bill, I could not see a vote taken without first speaking on the question. I am thoroughly in accord with the amendment proposing that the Bill should go into force on the 1st of October. If I had my way it would take effect at once. The honourable gentleman who has just taken his seat (Hon. Mr. Boyer) spoke of a large corporation by way of illustration. They did not complain of having to employ additional help in their offices when they changed the time of payment of gas bills from every three months to every month. I am sure that the railway companies and any other corporations in Canada can easily pay the additional help required in order to pay the wages of their employees fortnightly instead of