

Industrial Relations

for two weeks after three years. In the circumstances it was felt, taking all these things into consideration, we certainly are ahead of most provinces in this respect, but there are two provinces which apply two weeks after the first year.

Mr. Lesage: Since in matters of labour the provinces reserve jurisdiction except in certain cases where the federal government has jurisdiction, and for reasons given by the Minister of Labour, I for one will have to vote against this amendment.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I confess that a while ago I spent some hurried moments in going through the Ottawa papers for the week when the Liberal convention was held in order to try to find out where the Liberals stood on this question. I could not find out but now we have the statement of the hon. member who has just resumed his seat.

Mr. Lesage: I spoke for myself.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Oh, well, maybe my hon. friend has not been able to find that in the papers either.

An hon. Member: Nobody could find it.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): The Liberals did take a stand on some labour matters and I hope they took a stand on this important question.

I might just say to the Minister of Labour that I do not think it is a very strong point for him to say there is a retroactive provision in this clause which makes it possible for employees who already have two years' service to enjoy the benefit of this legislation just as soon as it comes into effect. I am glad it is that way but in the same vein I can point out to him that a large percentage of employees who come under federal labour jurisdiction already have more than this legislation will provide.

The purpose of this legislation is to extend that benefit to the few workers in the federal field who do not now have it and to give a lead to the provinces, the province of my hon. friend the member for Montmagny-L'Islet and to all of the provinces of this country. I earnestly hope that not too many members will be taken in by this argument that we should not be out in front and should not be taking a lead. My hon. friends across the way sometimes call themselves just Conservatives, but they sometimes call themselves Progressive Conservatives. Why not be progressive in this respect? Sometimes the Liberals—in my province at any rate—call themselves Liberal Progressives. Why can they not be progressive too? We think it is a good idea that the federal government should

[Mr. Starr.]

be at least in line with the best legislation existing in this country which is already in effect in two provinces. For that reason we urge the approval of this amendment to clause 4.

Amendment (Mr. Knowles, Winnipeg North Centre) negatived: Yeas, 28; nays, 82.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Chairman, before clause 4 carries, may I ask a question on behalf of my hon. friend the member for Fort William, to be clear on one point. The hon. member asked whether it is clear that this bill applies with equal effect to men and to women. My bill did have a clause in it spelling that out; this one does not, but I assume that the words "every employee" are quite explicit.

Mr. Starr: Yes, it is.

Mr. Schneider: I would like to ask the minister whether there is not a possibility of a misinterpretation in clause 1. Under this bill every employee is entitled to a vacation of at least two weeks with pay in respect of every completed year of employment. Is there not, then, a possibility that some bright employee might come along and claim two weeks' holidays for every year which he has completed? That is to say, if he were employed for two years he could claim four weeks, and so on. I just wonder whether there is a chance of misinterpretation and whether the word "every" should not be changed to "each"?

Mr. Starr: We checked that particular part of the clause with the Department of Justice and we were assured that it could not be misinterpreted.

Clauses 4 to 6 inclusive agreed to.

On clause 7—*Termination of employment.*

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Chairman, I rise simply to point out that clause 7 is another one which carries forward the proposal that those with less than two years' service are not entitled to two weeks' holiday with pay. Had my amendment to clause 4 carried I should, of course, have moved an appropriate amendment to clause 7 striking out paragraph (b) thereof. However, that would have been only a consequential amendment and since the other amendment did not carry I will not propose it now. Rather, I hope that when we get to third reading the house will agree to refer this bill back and deal with the two clauses together in order to effect the change which, I am sure, the minister in his heart of hearts would like to make.

Mr. Barnett: Mr. Chairman, I think that clause 7 is an appropriate point at which to