

*Labour Conditions*

very searching questions. If there is one thing which is certain it is that no legislation has been more difficult for provincial governments to administer and enforce than the minimum wage laws of the various provinces. It seems obvious to me that the federal government is going to have the same kind of problem.

I am sorry that the estimates of the Department of Labour have been passed because I am convinced it will be impossible for the department to enforce this proposed legislation. I am convinced it will be impossible for the present staff of the Department of Labour to check employers who come under the jurisdiction of the federal government sufficiently well so that the people who are guaranteed the standards set forth in this legislation will receive the things to which they are entitled. I say that because I am satisfied from what I know of the Department of Labour that they simply do not have the required number of people on the staff to be able to make individual investigations of companies that come under federal jurisdiction to ensure that the employees who should be getting the rates of pay and other benefits provided in the bill will receive them. I hope the minister will be able to tell members of the house and the general public very soon what steps the department intends to take to make sure the provisions of the legislation will be enforced by the federal Department of Labour.

This is not a criticism of the department. I am sure many members of the house saw the news report that appeared in one of the Ottawa papers quite recently in which it was stated that a check made by the Ontario department of labour a short period of time after their new minimum wage law came into effect had resulted in the department being able to secure adjustments in pay amounting to \$20,000 or \$30,000 for people who were covered by the new provisions of the Ontario act but were not being paid the new rates. I cite this simply as an illustration of the kind of problem that I think the Department of Labour will have to face in administering the act, and I certainly hope they will make sure that the legislation is lived up to by employers who come under the jurisdiction of the federal Department of Labour.

I should like to join with other members of the house in all groups who have deplored the fact that the Yukon and Northwest Territories are excluded from the provisions of the bill. I should like to remind hon. members that in the Yukon and Northwest Territories

[Mr. Orlikow.]

a substantial number of the people living there are of Indian ethnic origin. I have figures taken from the 1961 census which show that of the 14,500 people in the Yukon, 2,000 are Indians and of the 23,000 people in the Northwest Territories almost 5,000 are Indians.

The whole record in Canada of the treatment of the Indian people has been such that consistently the Indians have earned less than other people in Canada. I have some figures with me which were prepared by the dominion bureau of statistics on the basis of the 1961 census and I think they illustrate the problem very graphically. For the year ended June 1, 1961 the average annual earnings of all Canadian workers, on wages or salaries, was \$3,192 while the average earnings of all Indians who worked were \$1,661 or just over half.

Here we have a bill which places a floor of \$1.25 an hour on wages for all people who come under federal jurisdiction. It seems to me that if the government is serious in wanting to raise the standards of Canadian citizens particularly of the original people of Canada, the Indians and the Eskimos, it really makes no sense at all to exclude the Yukon and the Northwest Territories from the provisions of this legislation. In a report prepared for the province of Manitoba on Manitoba's economic future it was estimated that the per capita earned income of Indians in northern Manitoba was only \$155 a year. I am certain that if the same kind of study were made of the economic position of the Indian and Eskimo population of the Yukon and Northwest Territories we would find that the annual earned income of these people would be no higher than the Indians of northern Manitoba to whom I have referred.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Much lower.

**Mr. Rhéaume:** Lower.

**Mr. Orlikow:** The members from the Yukon and Northwest Territories say it is lower. That makes the case even more depressing and tragic. Before we come to the clause by clause study of the bill I would urge the minister to give serious consideration to agreeing to an amendment or, better still, to bringing in an amendment which will include the Yukon and Northwest Territories. It may be there are reasons for exclusion which seem valid. It may be that the government feels that in the not too distant future these areas will be provinces. They may feel that these are matters which should be dealt with by the territorial councils. There may be other reasons of which I am not aware;