

*Canada Labour (Standards) Code*

industries over which the government has jurisdiction who do not as yet receive the full benefits of the Canada Labour (Standards) Code. There are still a number of industries to which the provisions of the law have not been applied and which in effect are exempted from it for the time being, so that the employees working in those industries do not receive the full benefits of the law which came into existence about a year and a half ago.

Although the amendment before us is an acceptable one in that it deals with a situation which perhaps was not fully foreseen at the time the original code was before the house, nevertheless it contains certain loopholes. I had hoped that in bringing forward an amendment to the standards code the minister would have taken account of the fact that certain industries under federal jurisdiction have been able to postpone effectively the application of one section of the code.

Earlier today I asked the Minister of Labour (Mr. Nicholson) a question regarding the application of the code to the shipping industry. I believe that tomorrow a meeting will be held with representatives of the shipping industry to determine whether or not a mutually satisfactory formula can be worked out regarding the application of the hours-of-work section of the Canada labour code to the shipping industry. Eighteen months is quite a long period of time to wait before arrangements can be made for the representatives in the industry simply to sit down to see if they can work out a formula. I am saying this because one of the principal provisions of the act states that any postponement of the application of the hours-of-work section should not exceed 18 months before either being rejected or substituted by as ministerial order. Unfortunately, there is another section of the code which permits an extension beyond the period of 18 months. By dragging its feet, industry, has so far been able to postpone the application of a particular section of the law, thus denying the employees in that industry the full benefits applicable to them.

In this connection, I might also mention the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation which has deliberately postponed the application of the law by giving extremely technical and legal interpretations of the provisions of the code. The corporation has thus been able to put off the full force of the law as it applies to the C.B.C. employees concerned. I think that the C.B.C. being a government agency, should be one of the first organizations to put the law

[Mr. Howard.]

into effect in the spirit in which it was passed by parliament.

I do not wish to speak on this subject too long because I will probably run afoul of the rules, but I thought it was worthwhile briefly to put on the record our regret that the bill before us does not contain provisions which could adequately cope with the fact that by virtue of a variety of circumstances there has been a lack of application of the law. There has been the reluctance of industry to apply the law to its employees, and, to put it politely, there has been the pressure of work with which the Department of Labour must cope.

I hope that the minister, if he finds an industry to which the law does not apply, will take steps, either through new regulations or through an amendment to the bill, to see that the law of Canada is made to apply to all the industries under federal jurisdiction in the spirit in which it was passed by parliament.

So far as the contents of the bill are concerned, I do not know whether I can go quite as far as the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. McCleave) when he said that there is a qualified or reluctant support for it. There should be a full and unqualified support for it on our part.

**Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Revelstoke):** Mr. Speaker, I should not like to delay too long the approval of the bill before the house. We welcome it. The minister does not need a reminder from me or from anyone else in the house of the extreme sensitivity in these times regarding the conditions of employment at Canadian ports. If we can act to improve those conditions to a degree which has long been accepted in other industries, then I think we should move quickly in that direction.

Last evening many of us heard the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) say that in these days of change governments must be flexible. I hope that in dealing with these types of problems which have caused this bill to be presented to us the government might in the future be a little more flexible and be able to foresee a little earlier the need for this type of change. This would eliminate the necessity of employees refusing to work and court injunctions forcing them to work on statutory holidays. In other words, earlier action would avoid the sort of experience we have had during the last few months.

I believe there has been an undue delay in bringing this legislation before the house.