

*Canada Elections Act*

in the city but is away on public business. In his absence I have been asked, as Acting Minister of Labour, to point out that the minister and the Department of Labour have followed with interest this judgment of the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench. From the advice that has been made available to me it would seem that my hon. friend is rushing things a little too quickly by presenting an amendment to the federal legislation at this time. The information that I have is that the unions feel they have good grounds for launching an appeal and that they propose to do so. Of course, if the appeal is successful there would be no necessity for the amendment, as my hon. friend well knows.

Following the appeal, should it be desirable to amend the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act it would seem that this should be done only after a careful examination of all the implications, and particularly the effect on trade unions as unincorporated bodies and the repercussions which, of course, may occur in the field of general law, both civil and criminal. Pending further information I am going to suggest to my hon. friend, having in mind that there is going to be an appeal launched as we are advised, that perhaps he would be willing to let the matter stand. I say to him, on behalf of the Minister of Labour, that if it is finally established that there is still any uncertainty or any defect in this section of the federal statute requiring correction, careful consideration will be given to the question as to whether or not an amendment along the lines proposed by my hon. friend should be undertaken. Having in mind this statement, I would ask my hon. friend if at this time he would be agreeable to allowing this bill to stand?

**Mr. Speaker:** I take it that the minister moves the adjournment of the debate?

**Mr. Martin:** Yes.

On motion of Mr. Martin the debate was adjourned.

**CANADA ELECTIONS ACT**

## AMENDMENT TO REDUCE VOTING AGE

The house resumed, from Friday, June 4, consideration of the motion of Mr. Argue for the second reading of Bill No. 390, to amend the Canada Elections Act.

**Mr. Argue:** Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** I presume if the hon. member speaks now, he will be closing the debate.

**Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Secretary of State):** Mr. Speaker, I had not realized that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew) had completed his remarks on this bill, or I

[Mr. Martin.]

would have been in my place. I am really a little worried about the state of grace in which I find myself, when, for this the third time in almost as many days, I am in complete agreement with the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Fleming:** Things are looking up for you.

**Mr. Knowles:** You were born a Tory, were you not?

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Well, I do not know whether it is possible to be born a Tory, but I heard a good deal about Toryism in my youth, and it took quite a long time to get over it. I hope, sir, that there will not be a relapse.

**Mr. Drew:** I assure the minister that agreement in this instance will not prejudice his position.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I appreciate the intervention of the Leader of the Opposition.

I was about to say that I agree with what was said by him about this measure. I am not at all sure that when one attains the age of 21 years he is endowed with wisdom he does not have at 20, at 19, or 18 or 17, or even 14. The Leader of the Opposition referred to a member of his family who is 14, and I could refer to some members of mine, all of whom are younger than that and who sometimes display more wisdom than, in my very prejudiced view, is sometimes displayed by some legislators in this chamber— if I may be permitted to say that.

**Mr. Knowles:** The race is improving on that side of the chamber, too.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** But the reason I was impressed by the argument of the Leader of the Opposition—indeed, I had intended to make it myself, had he not got there first— was that it does seem to me that before we change the voting age we should change the age at which people who would vote would have full legal capacity. The age of 21 years is that at which one can sue and be sued on one's own account, and the age at which one assumes full legal obligations. As I conceive it, voting is one of the most important of the obligations of a full citizen. If there is to be a change in the voting age, as to the wisdom of which I think there can be two opinions, and about which up to now I must confess I have not formed any very strong views, it seems to me the other step ought to be taken first.

There is another danger in this kind of proposal. It seems to me it is the kind to which the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Argue), and perhaps to an even greater extent the hon. member who represents Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), are prone, and that is