

Statutory Holidays

Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood): I propose to vote against this bill for a reason that has not yet been given. Apparently it is assumed that few people can ever get away for the week end, that they all spend their week ends quietly at home, and that this is a measure whereby people will be able to get a couple of extra week ends and have a nice quiet time. My experience is that there is a large number of people now—far too many, in my opinion, for my comfort or anyone else's—who go away for week ends. What a time they have, when you consider what happens! They cut into Friday afternoon. They take long drives into the country. They arrive at their country place and find everything in disorder. Then they have an unquiet Saturday and Sunday. On Monday they start back again. My experience with these week ends is that people arrive back thoroughly exhausted and need two or three days to get rested up. If there is anything in that suggestion, it seems to me it is a consideration which should be taken into account before hon. members give their vote.

I should also like to say that I have some feeling—not on the ground exactly that the hon. member for Macleod gave—which may be a silly sentimental feeling, that these days might continue to be celebrated on the actual days involved. But I certainly do not wish to say that in such a way that it arouses the slightest feeling of my having the slightest criticism except, as I say, from the point of view I first mentioned, namely the undesirability of having more people go away and exhaust themselves on week ends.

Mr. Knowles: I should just like to say a few words in support of the amendment moved by the hon. member for Peel. He did not take the words out of my mouth, for they had already been uttered; but he did take the words off my sheets of paper here. I was drafting a similar amendment. May I at this moment, Mr. Chairman, avoid getting into the heated part of the argument, namely as to whether this bill passes at all or not. I would suggest that for a few moments those who are for the bill as well as those who are against it might consider the question: If the bill is going to pass, which way do we want it to read?

In the form in which it is before us as moved by the hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard, Dominion day would be celebrated between July 1 and July 7. In the way in which it is proposed by the hon. member for Peel it would be celebrated between June 28 and July 4. It seems to me that the latter is preferable. At the moment I am not arguing whether we have the bill at all or not. But if we are going to have it, let us have it

[Mr. MacDougall.]

on the Monday nearest in point of time to the actual day on which confederation was enacted. The same suggestion would apply with regard to the 24th of May. The wording suggested in clause 2 by the hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard would mean that the 24th of May would be celebrated at varying dates from May 24 to May 30. But if we accept the amendment to clause 2 which I presume the hon. member for Peel would make—and if he would not, I would—that would mean that the 24th of May would be celebrated between May 21 and May 27. In no case would the day of celebration be more than three days away from the actual day itself. I submit that it is better to be three days or less away from the actual day than to be six days away. I am not going to get worked up even about the difference between the amendment and the motion. I do not think that we need to get heated up about this matter or to use such words as “bosh” or other words that may have been in people's minds. For the moment I submit that we should give serious consideration to the terms of the amendment put forward by the hon. member for Peel.

Mr. Stewart (Yorkton): As to the amendment, I think the hon. member for Peel has overlooked one important matter. All the public school examinations in the higher grades, and a good many of the university examinations, take place towards the end of June.

Mr. Graydon: That must be the summer course.

Mr. Stewart (Yorkton): The students have to travel home the last few days in June and sometimes the last day in June; I refer to those that are attending university.

Mr. Graydon: That is the summer course.

Mr. Stewart (Yorkton): No. That is the general course in our public schools in Saskatchewan. Our children are not through their examinations in the final grade until the last week in June. I have sent four of them through and I should know what I am talking about. In addition, those who are attending college at Winnipeg from Saskatchewan finish up only in time to get home on the first of July. Those who are attending ladies' schools in Winnipeg are in about the same category. I note the remarks made by the learned hon. member for Greenwood. He says that when you go out on a holiday you get exhausted and played out. That is all right for the hon. member for Greenwood to say because he is naturally slim and can keep his shape. But some of the rest of the members in this chamber who are cooped up in law offices all the time have not been able to get out with