

*Supply—Labour*

the Royal Bank of Canada or the Toronto-Dominion Bank, will not be entitled to their own union, because of the precedent and the rules established by the Canada Labour Relations Board. They will have to be members of the same union—they will inevitably be in minority—as bank employees of other provinces, even though they do not want this. But they want their own union all this will inevitably go against the freedom of union because this freedom also means that every worker will be free to choose his union within a unit of negotiation.

I speak of precedents that this might create in the case of bank employees, but the same precedent could be created—in fact, it exists—for railway employees. There is a refusal to divide two units of negotiation. But, Mr. Chairman, I want to tell the Minister of Labour (Mr. Nicholson) that a great number of railway employees in the various brotherhoods want to change unions so as to have their own union here, in Quebec.

• (3:10 p.m.)

We are receiving scores of letters of protest from railroad employees. As a matter of fact, I mentioned it to the C.N.R. management when their report was studied two or three years ago and they told me that they did not want to split the national negotiation units.

The freedom to choose their own labour union is refused only to a group of C.N.R. and C.P.R. employees in Quebec.

Many other sectors in the labour field find themselves in the same situation, where the employees are not really free to choose but are obliged to abide by the decision of the majority from other provinces.

Mr. Chairman, I think the Minister of Labour should take those remarks into consideration and should make the necessary amendments to the Canada Labour Relations Board Act in order to give satisfaction to those who are denied freedom to choose their own unions.

Of course, there is no question of splitting the negotiation units endlessly. When the employees of a natural negotiation unit, those of the French network for instance, are concerned, it does not affect the whole matter adversely or prevent the signing of labour agreements with the C.B.C. There is no duplication because the French network is separate from the English network.

It could be the same in banks operations, where employees, in accordance with labour legislation, come under federal jurisdiction. It

is the same for railway employees, national transport employees, etc.

Therefore, I believe that the minister should amend a law which, after having been tried, now tends to impose and has even imposed on a rather large group of employees a union they did not want, denying them membership in the union of their choice.

Inevitably, when there is a vote between an international union and a union which, until now, remains almost exclusively within the province of Quebec, of course, the employees of nine other provinces are more numerous—whether they work for the C.B.C., the railways or the bank—than those of Quebec alone.

Then, the nine other provinces are compelling or forcing the Quebec workers to accept the union they have chosen, thus denying Quebec employees the right to choose their own union.

Then I believe that amendments must be made to the act. I think the minister should ask the advice of the interested parties about these amendments and then present them to parliament, so that they can be passed as soon as possible.

So far as this particular case is concerned, for several weeks now, I have been asking the minister whether he has received the report of the Canada Labour Relations Board concerning the C.N.T.U. request to represent the employees of the French-speaking network of the C.B.C. The minister told me today, on the orders of the day, that he has not yet received this report. However, I think that certain details—it may only be a rumour—have come out about this report. It was also mentioned that the Canada Labour Relations Board produced an equality of voices on a vote—four against four. This may seem strange, since the board is made up of nine members, the ninth being the C.N.T.U. which, some time earlier, decided not to attend the meetings of the board.

If that is the case, the best advice I can give the C.N.T.U. leaders is to register their vote at least on this occasion, which would give a majority of five against four in favour of their request to be allowed to represent the employees of the French network of the C.B.C.

According to certain newspapers, the vote now stands at four in favour and four against. The C.N.T.U. would merely have to attend another meeting and ask for a new vote to obtain satisfaction in this respect. And even if