

consider this question. The Governor in Council does have some responsibility in this regard. We want to review the whole question of wages. The provisions of this bill represent minimum standards, not necessarily acceptable ones, and I hope the employers of this country, particularly those who can pay more than the minimum wage and fall within the federal sphere, will accept the moral responsibility of doing so. I am thinking specifically of chartered banks and other chartered companies. They should not hide behind the fact that we cannot differentiate between industries in establishing standards.

In setting the \$1.75 as the minimum wage, we accept the situation that this matter is everybody's problem. This does not absolve certain companies from their moral obligations toward people. I think this debate has been very responsible and, as the Minister of Labour, I take this opportunity once again of thanking those who have participated in this forum in respect of this legislation.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Would the hon. minister permit a question? If I did not happen to hear him on this matter I am sure he will tell me so. Can the minister give us some indication of his intention regarding the early printing of an office consolidation of the new legislation?

Mr. Mackasey: It is my understanding, and I am subject to correction, that this is the will of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner). I think the new IRDI Act will be known as the labour code, part something or other. I suggest to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre that all legislation referring to industrial relations will be co-ordinated, or codified, as they call it, and that this is in the process of being done. It will be, however, a departure from tradition to refer to the IRDA, which became a statute in 1948, some 23 years ago, as the Labour Code, section 4, or something of that nature. In any event this will be a much more orderly package, and people will be able to go to the Statutes of Canada and find together all the pieces of legislation dealing exclusively or primarily with industrial relations.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I am sure the minister realizes it is precisely because of this departure from tradition that it would be useful to put all this legislation in one place. I have in mind not just what has already been put in the Statutes, specifically the Revised Statutes of Canada 1970, but as well the changes being made by the bill now before us.

Mr. McCleave: Before the minister takes his seat I wonder whether he would permit a question? My question arises out of the minister's remarks about the establishment of a minimum wage. Is the formula to establish a minimum wage one that will be acceptable in all parts of Canada, bearing in mind that some areas have higher standards of living and wages? Has there been an attempt to strike a national average, keeping in mind higher cost areas, in order that there will be something meaningful?

Post Office Act

Mr. Mackasey: Very briefly, the formula now being adopted is that the minimum wage can be raised by the Governor in Council. I have resisted the temptation to set minimum wages on a regional basis because I happen to believe, perhaps wrongly, that in the Atlantic provinces housing may be less expensive but this is offset by the higher cost of food, and that therefore the cost of living in Halifax is not tremendously different from the high cost of living in central Canada. As a basic philosophy, I happen to believe in a uniform rate of wage across Canada. I believe in national units. Having said this, when establishing a minimum wage across the nation I must take into consideration the existing minimum wage legislation in the provincial field in the Atlantic provinces. If there were a formula which permitted a minimum in Ontario of \$2.50, in British Columbia \$2 and in Nova Scotia \$1.50, I can envisage the abuses which might occur in those less fortunate parts of the country. In this case, the regional rates could never match the rate in central Canada. The formula is now based on common sense and the Governor in Council will establish new rates as often as possible.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.

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• (4:50 p.m.)

POST OFFICE ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING STAMP AGENTS' COMMISSION, LETTER MAIL PREPARATION ARRANGEMENTS, EXTRAORDINARY SERVICES, MEMBERS' MAIL, ETC.

The House resumed, from Tuesday, June 15 consideration of Bill C-240, to amend the Post Office Act, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I recognize the Postmaster General (Mr. Côté) on a point of order.

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Côté (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I wish to ask for the unanimous consent of the House in order to move an amendment to the bill at this stage.

I move that Bill C-240...

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Postmaster General has asked the consent of hon. members to propose an amendment at this stage. Is there such consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.