

Interim Supply

Mr. Chairman, this is a human problem, which cannot leave the members of the house indifferent, and above all, I imagine, the Minister of Labour, who is responsible for the administration of the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act, and also of the Unemployment Insurance Act.

Mr. Chairman, paragraph 4 of section 7 of the Industrial Relations and Disputes Act, chapter 152, reads as follows:

Where a collective agreement is in force, the application for a new certification may be made at any time after the expiry of ten months of the term of the collective agreement.

The dockers tried to become members of another union within legal limits because the existing agreement between the international longshoremen's association was concluded on January 1, 1963 and will remain in force until December 31, 1965.

Therefore, the collective agreement has been in existence for 22 months and the dockers, under a right guaranteed by the law, can freely join another union if they wish to.

It is true that the constitution of the international longshoremen's association stipulates that any attempt to introduce another union among the dockers is liable to expulsion and fine.

How come, Mr. Chairman, that the regulations of the American union prevail over a Canadian law?

How is it possible that Canadian workers cannot change their union allegiance, are denied their trade union freedom because it is forbidden by the constitution of an American union? How can the American unions, just as an ex-president of an American union at the present time, thus ignore our laws and scoff with impunity at the Canadian Bill of Rights which guarantees freedom of association?

Mr. Chairman, I ask the Minister of Labour to intervene and to see that a serious study is made of this matter, to ensure that the freedom of our unions and their members is respected, and that those workers, until such time as they go back to their jobs, or to any job, receive the unemployment insurance to which human beings in their position are entitled.

[Text]

Mr. Aiken: Mr. Chairman, I want to take advantage of interim supply to make a proposal which I sincerely set out for the consideration of the house, and of those who may be interested in it. It comes technically under the estimates of the privy council and relates

[Mr. Rondeau.]

particularly to the centennial commission. The suggestion I want to make is basically directed toward this commission and I am hoping it will be taken into consideration when the spending estimates for special projects are considered.

Very briefly I am going to present a confederation student exchange program. By way of background I should like to point out that all who have studied Canada's problems, political, social and economic, agree that they arise from its immense size and diversity of interest. We have really six regions in Canada—the maritimes, Quebec, Ontario, the prairies, British Columbia and the north. Our problems are magnified by a lack of understanding in each area of the outlook of the others. It applies not only as between all regions of Canada. Lack of understanding is most dramatic with the province of Quebec and the other provinces because of difficulty in communication; but other regional differences are just as great and are often overlooked.

It has seemed to me that one of the great opportunities of our centennial celebrations is to do something positive toward removing these areas of misunderstanding. There is no longer any excuse from a transportation or communication aspect. The means of transportation is there; bus, rail, air and motor vehicle travel facilities are fast and plentiful. The beauty and magnitude and diversity of Canada has hardly been explored by Canadians either young or old, but it is the young people in whom the hope of the future lies and who deserve the best we can give them in preparation for building a better Canada.

In this context I propose a confederation student exchange of a magnitude and nature not previously undertaken, and one which only a central body such as the federal government or the centennial commission can sponsor and underwrite. Several public minded organizations are presently sponsoring student exchanges in Canada within the limits of their own resources. Visite interprovinciale and the Canadian council of Christians and Jews are two worth mentioning. They sponsor trips from two weeks to a month, and this year about 3,000 students will have visited other parts of Canada. The plan I propose, however, is different in both magnitude and depth. If accepted, it will throw the resources of the nation into a real effort to create a unified and self-confident Canada.

The fundamentals of the plan are these: first, a home to home exchange of students among the various regions of Canada, for one full school term, for students in their third