

Vacation Leave Bill

In Saskatchewan, for example, according to the Labour Code, employees can enjoy two weeks annual vacation after one year, and three weeks after five years.

Three other provinces, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia, legislated so that the employee would have two weeks annual vacation after one year of service.

Four provinces, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick, legislated so that the employee would only get one week vacation.

Two provinces, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, have passed no legislation on this subject up to now, at least as far as I know.

With regard to the Canada Labour Code, we know that the labour standards came into force on July 1, 1965. With this code, the vacation period extended from one week to two weeks for employees with one year of service, taking into consideration the eight general statutory holidays—the eight non working days—with pay, as I mentioned earlier. That was, a few years ago, a substantial improvement in the case of numerous employees.

A proposal such as the one in the bill now under study, that would increase substantially the standards concerning annual vacations, could hardly be seriously considered at this time. I think it would also be wise to consider the International Labour Organization in this field.

According to the 1964 statistics, a group of experts has already completed the study of that problem throughout the world and come to the conclusion that there was a tendency to extend the vacation period in numerous industries.

As regards the future, one would obviously hope to grant three weeks annual vacation, but not at this time, because of the complexities involved and of the general practice.

It is, at present, the best solution. Such was my opinion in the past as it still is now. I believe it is in accordance with the principles of our party and with the respect due to private enterprise.

When I think of private enterprise, I do not think only of the boss or the owner but of the employees also. That is why I find it normal, since a reasonable minimum is already provided in our Labour Code, to leave to collective bargaining the task of setting the length of the annual holidays in relation to the years of service and of discussing the matter with the bosses taking into account the nature of

[Mr. LeBlanc (Rimouski).]

the industry, the work, the number of employees and a host of other conditions we all know. We must all ask ourselves how far the legislators should go when setting minimum standards for working conditions, without interfering in the field of collective bargaining, and I think that it is one of the basic principles which inspired the people who drafted our Labour Code—and who are still working on it—to improve our labour legislation and the lot of the Canadian workers.

Where the labour market is steady enough to enable an employee to accumulate several years of continuous employment for the same employer, it seems that there is no obstacle to an effective trade union organization. The present government, just like those preceding it, has taken a great interest in the improvement of labour conditions. In fact, we know that the question of holidays, of annual vacations, holds more and more the attention and to what extent the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. MacEachen) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) concern themselves in retraining our labour force, in order to enable it to play an effective part in our country.

Our Speeches from the Throne, which always reflect the principles of our governments, have never neglected the labour policy, as shown by the legislation passed during the last session and by the bills now appearing on the order paper. It is obvious that in all areas of Canada, we must have healthy workers and that we must take their needs into account by granting them reasonable holidays. But the government which is responsibly playing its part cannot infringe on the rights and privileges of the Canadian people. This is why we are always striving in that field to provide maximum justice.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. It being six o'clock, the hour for consideration of private members business has expired and the house will resume its business at eight o'clock.

[*English*]

At six o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at 8 p.m.

AGRICULTURE**PREVENTION OF INTRODUCTION OR SPREAD OF PLANT PESTS**

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Olson for second reading and