

Supply—Labour

been some changes since that time and they may have settled some cases, but I suggest that the number has been pretty small. Under the heading "air transport" we find there are 184 companies which have applied for deferment and that 177 deferment orders have been issued. Under the heading "flour mills" we find there were 784 applications for deferment and 716 applications for suspension. The table shows 1,500 deferment orders and the date August 1, 1967. I do not know whether they are deferred until August 1, 1967 or whether they will be settled on August 1, 1967. The government certainly is not living up to the 40-hour week provision. We find that 374 grain elevators applied for deferment. The table shows that 348 were given deferment orders until August 1, 1967. It also shows that 2,634 highway transport companies applied for deferment, that 35 applied for suspension and that there are 2,645 in respect of which the applications are under review.

It is time the minister told us how long these applications will be under review. Under the heading "radio and T.V. broadcasting" we find that 40 companies asked for deferment, that two asked for suspension and that there were 34 deferment orders. Under the heading "shipping companies" we find that 129 companies asked for deferment, that 31 asked for suspension and that in 157 cases discussions are being held between employers and the unions. How can the unions succeed in getting the companies to live up to the act when the minister will not enforce it? This table shows that there are similar situations in respect of the stevedoring and longshoring companies and in respect of the telephone, telegraph and cable systems.

What I am endeavouring to point out is that literally thousands of companies have asked for deferment in respect of which the deferment has not been processed. The government spent money to publish full page advertisement. It did not contain a picture of the former minister but it did contain a drawing which looked remarkably like the former minister of labour. This advertisement extolled the virtues of the act and told the people of Canada how much they would get as a result of this act which this wonderful government had passed.

In respect of the one provision of the act which meant anything to them, tens of thousands of workers have not received anything and will not unless the minister and the department get down to the job they are supposed to do. This is a sad situation for the

tens of thousands of workers who are concerned. These are the people who are entitled to the 40-hour week because of the law which has been passed by this parliament but they are not receiving the benefit of this because the law is being ignored and its application deferred. Whatever the reasons may have been for the deferments, such as the transitional period and so on, I suggest that the minister and his department should get on with the job now after two years have gone by and clean up these applications. A final date should be set so that these workers who were given such rosy promises by the government will be able to get the benefits of the law which this government proposed and to which this parliament agreed.

• (3:00 p.m.)

[Translation]

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Chairman, it is not my intention to speak very long on the estimates of the Department of Labour.

However, I should like to bring to the attention of the house the fact that there is, now, in the Department of Labour a problem which I think should be corrected. Earlier in this sitting I asked the Minister of Labour (Mr. Nicholson) to set out the views of his department concerning the C.N.T.U. applications to the Canada Labour Relations Board regarding natural units and the splitting of national units into natural units. The minister answered that the Canada Labour Relations Board was created by an act of parliament and that it must not be interfered with.

Mr. Chairman, to this I will answer that it is very well to create a board such as the Canada Labour Relations Board by an act of parliament, but if, as time goes by, after a few years, shortcomings or weaknesses are found in the operation of the said board, well, then it behoves parliament to amend the act and the minister to introduce the necessary amending legislation.

The minister says that the Canada Labour Relations Board is governed by an act of parliament. I agree. The minister also says that if something is wrong with the Canada Labour Relations Board, an act of parliament is required to right this wrong. But it should be said also that it is the minister who must bring in the necessary amendments to that act which has now proved highly deficient and requires many changes.

Everybody knows that the C.L.R.B. is made up of nine members, namely four delegates from management, four from labour and the