

Railway Operations Act

with" in the Oxford dictionary. It says simply "immediately, without delay".

Mr. Muir: May I ask the minister one brief question? If all that he says should be done is not carried out, is he prepared to assure the House that it will be carried out as soon as these discrepancies are brought to his attention?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Yes, Mr. Chairman. I might add that also under the Canada Labour Code there is protection against discrimination against workers. I discussed the matter fully with the Minister of Transport and he is prepared to co-operate in terms of dealing with the companies to ensure that the intent of parliament is carried out as rapidly as possible.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muir: I thank the minister for his reply, but I regret to say that it has brought up another question. Is the minister prepared to prosecute the railway companies if they do not carry out the letter of the law as contained in this legislation?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Obviously we are satisfied that if the companies do not carry out the will of parliament they will be in breach of the statute and will be committing an offence and should be prosecuted.

Mr. Baldwin: The same as anybody else who does not obey under the criminal law.

The Deputy Chairman: Is the committee ready for the question on the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Skeena?

Mr. Howard: I drafted the four day proposal after consulting with members who sit in the party to my right with the thought that they might support that proposition, but the hon. member for St. John's East has dashed that commitment to the ground, thus indicating that some Conservatives are not to be trusted no matter what the situation.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of any such consultation, and may I suggest to you with great respect, even though the hour is late, that we are realizing what the hon. member is trying to achieve and we support his objective. All we are saying is that the minister's amendment states it much more strongly and effectively.

Mr. Howard: It does not help the matter a bit, Mr. Chairman.

● (0050)

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Howard: I have noticed one thing about the gentlemen who sit to the right of me. They can dish it out, but they sure can't take it. I am trying to put some facts on record so that those who may have dealings with them in future will know about them. I also wish to see whether hon. members will be generous enough to give me a second opportunity to withdraw the amendment.

[Mr. McGrath.]

The Deputy Chairman: Am I to assume that the hon. member is seeking the unanimous consent of the committee to withdraw his second amendment?

Mr. Howard: Certainly.

Mr. McGrath: We are generous enough to get the hon. member off the hook.

The Deputy Chairman: Does the committee give unanimous consent to the hon. member for Skeena to withdraw his amendment to clause 4.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Amendment (Mr. Howard) withdrawn.

The Deputy Chairman: The committee will now consider an amendment which was moved by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar which reads as follows:

That paragraph (a) of subclause (3) of clause 4 of Bill C-217 be amended by inserting after the word Act in line 25, the words "or were laid off as a consequence of the strike".

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): I believe this is a similar amendment to the one which the hon. member for Skeena withdrew. I think the basis on which the hon. member for Skeena withdrew his amendment also takes care of the concern of the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar concerning lay-offs. Indeed, there is to be some further assurance that the person who is laid off and then brought back to work cannot immediately be laid off again. That amendment, of course, can be inserted in the general section at the back of the bill at page 10 and applied to the entire bill. I think that would take care of the situation and perhaps the hon. member would be prepared to withdraw his amendment or take care of the matter when we get to page 10 of the bill.

Mr. Gleave: I am concerned to see that justice and fairness are observed and that workers go back to work following the action of this parliament. I accept that the minister in good faith has suggested this course and that the proposed wording in this act will give as much assurance to the workers as possible. I appreciate what the minister has done, and with that I am satisfied with the proposal as it stands.

The Deputy Chairman: Am I to understand that the hon. member wishes to withdraw his amendment.

Mr. Gleave: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

The Deputy Chairman: Does the committee give unanimous consent to the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar to withdraw the amendment he proposed to clause 4?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Amendment (Mr. Gleave) withdrawn.

The Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Clause 4 agreed to.

The Deputy Chairman: The committee will now consider clause 6. Shall clause 6 carry?