

*Combines Investigation Act*

and not the principle of the Combines Investigation Act. I stated also that frequently some leeway was allowed—I think the word I used then was “licence”—and I have allowed considerable leeway. We have had an extended debate, and, unless the house thinks otherwise, it would be my opinion that we should conform more to the rules and procedure of the house and discuss only those portions of the McGregor report which relate to this particular bill.

**Mr. Knowles:** It does seem to me that if this ruling is to be applied against the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker) there should be some clarification. Perhaps, sir, you would permit some discussion of the point before—

**Some hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Knowles:** Just a minute—before it becomes necessary for Your Honour to discriminate between different members. There are others in the house who may wish to discuss the matter as the hon. member for Lake Centre is discussing it, which I think he has a right to do. I am prepared to speak to the point now or at any other time.

**Mr. Speaker:** I hardly think that further discussion is necessary at this time. I had allowed a full discussion when I made my ruling. I assure the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) that I shall do my best not to discriminate between hon. members.

I think hon. members will realize that I am in a difficult position. It is going to be hard for me to determine just when an hon. member is referring to a section of the report that relates to this bill and when he is not. All I can do at this time is to ask the co-operation of all hon. members.

**Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I shall endeavour to keep within the purview of your ruling in the discussion of so important a matter as the various amendments to the Combines Investigation Act that have been presented to the house by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson). I feel sure you will agree, sir, that in discussing those amendments we should be permitted to review some of the events of the last year in relation to the Combines Investigation Act as it was, with a view to ascertaining whether, if these amendments are allowed, there will be any assurance that they will be enforced and that the law will be upheld, rather than the practice followed which has prevailed during the last year.

At the time of adjournment yesterday I was endeavouring to answer in general language

some of the statements made by the Minister of Justice as to why the law as it was, and as it still is, had not been enforced, had not been lived up to, had not been implemented so far as publication was concerned. The section having to do with publication is one of the most important provisions of the act. Indeed I think it was the former prime minister who said that publicity in connection with combines investigation was the antiseptic that was required in order to secure enforcement.

I suggest that when the government introduces these amendments parliament has a right to be assured that if they are approved—in a general way we accept the necessity for the amendments, reserving the right to discuss whether trial by jury should be taken away—they will be enforced. In considering these amendments one must necessarily take into consideration the events that have occurred and the answer given yesterday by the Minister of Justice to the question as to failure of the government to carry out the provisions of the act.

**Mr. Speaker:** I do not know how far the hon. member intends to proceed with his references to the clause in the act relating to publication, but there is nothing in the bill before the house amending that section, or, as I can see, relating to that section. I am not objecting to a reference to the clause, but I do not think it is debatable.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I always bow to your rulings, Mr. Speaker. Surely opportunity—I advance this by way of argument—should be afforded to hon. members to answer the statements made yesterday by the Minister of Justice when he dealt at length with the excuses for the failure of this government to publish.

**Mr. Speaker:** I must say to the hon. member that that opportunity was given to the house yesterday. When the Minister of Justice spoke on the amendment he did not close the debate, and other hon. members could have answered him at that time. As I said before, it is going to be difficult for me to keep hon. members in the straight and narrow path, shall I say, so far as this bill is concerned, but I think I have expressed the principle which should be followed.

**Mr. Knowles:** I know that hon. members—

**Some hon. Members:** Sit down.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Knowles:** I am raising a point of order, and I expect some hon. members to boo. But members of this house still have rights, and I think that this point should be cleared up.