

Combines Investigation Act

Mr. Kinneard of the national automobile trades association also brought up the very same point. As found on page 365 of the evidence, he said that apart from loss leaders generally their trade has been most seriously concerned about the effects that may accrue from the last two paragraphs (d) and (e). Then he went on to explain their concern. Finally, Miss Atkinson of the association of consumers, whose case was so ardently supported by the Liberal members of the committee, suggested that clause (e) went too far. I think there were others who took the same position but I only had an opportunity during the lunch hour to find the references to these three parties who had suggested that subclause (e) should be removed.

After considering the whole matter, a recommendation was made in the committee that subclause (e) should be removed from the bill. In the opinion of at least three of the witnesses who appeared this would help the bill a good deal and make it much better. As I mentioned this morning, I believe there are three other amendments reported in the proceedings which were made by the committee following the recommendations of the witnesses who appeared. Therefore I think that is a complete answer to any suggestion that the bill was railroaded through the committee by the Minister of Justice in just the form he wanted it.

I have one final comment to make concerning the export market. The minister said this morning that his department had considered the export problem and that when the appropriate time came a statement would be made. I suppose that means we will wait until we come to the clause. However, this was one of the things that came up in the committee from which I think a great deal of value will result. In many cases our exporters are dealing with or competing against economies which are state controlled and which are able to set prices at anything the state wishes in order to enter a competitive market. Several of the groups that appeared before the committee, particularly those from the west, the fisheries council and the lumbering interests on the west coast, made the statement that it was almost necessary to have some arrangement between exporters in order that they may compete with state-controlled economies. Personally I feel very strongly that these people need some special provision to make their position stronger.

Canada has a good deal of difficulty dealing in the export market for many very obvious reasons, the difference in wage costs, the differences in costs of production and also the fact that other economies set their prices so they will be competitive and without regard

to cost. I believe that some provision should be made with regard to the export market. One thing has occurred to me which I think I should mention and which I do not believe was raised in the committee. Perhaps the minister will give it consideration. I refer to whether such a provision in the Canadian combines act would contravene any international agreement such as GATT or any other similar international agreements. It may be that it will but if it does not I should very much like to see something done with regard to the export market.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman, since the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka did not quite succeed in doing so, perhaps I might as well set the record straight and point out a number of inconsistencies resulting from his comments. First of all, if I heard the phrase correctly I understood him to say, although it may have slipped out inadvertently without the hon. member realizing what he was saying, that the small business committee or section of the Conservative caucus asked Mr. Gilbert of the retail merchants association to give this committee on the caucus the benefit of his opinions on the bill. Is that right?

Mr. Aiken: That was the basis of the evidence that Mr. Gilbert gave to the committee.

Mr. Howard: On the 1958 bill?

Mr. Aiken: It was not the bill that was introduced; it was the previous bill on which he commented.

Mr. Pickersgill: It was not even that.

Mr. Benidickson: It was before any bill was submitted.

Mr. Howard: That clears that up because the hon. member knows very well from the evidence that Mr. Gilbert of the retail merchants association met the Conservative caucus subcommittee two days before the bill was introduced. Unless Mr. Gilbert knew what was in the bill, I do not think he could have made his comments on this particular bill.

Mr. Aiken: I think that was cleared up in the committee. We had quite a long discussion about this matter in the committee and it was quite clear that when I said "his bill" I referred to the amendments to the Combines Investigation Act.

Mr. Howard: That is fine. The hon. member said also that similar presentations were made to the C.C.F. and Liberal parties. This is not factual and I intend to show that it is not the case. That is why I asked the hon. member to give me the page reference in that it would more easily help me to find