

Combines Investigation Act

not seem to me that we should hesitate, though I go a long way with the minister in his view that we should not hastily make a change of a general character without considering all its implications. Perhaps the minister could be specific about what special feature there is in this matter, because I certainly do not think there would be any objection to applying it to the whole of Canada. The principle is either good or bad, and if it is good there is no reason why it should be confined to British Columbia.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Chairman, the situation is not as simple as perhaps the hon. member might have supposed in his approach. If it had been simple then I doubt very much if the proceedings would have gone this far. They are much more complex than any mere question of collective bargaining as ordinarily understood. I am reluctant to discuss the issues, because after all the rights of parties are either under adjudication or are awaiting adjudication at the present time. I think the hon. member will understand why I am reluctant, for that reason, to discuss the issues. But it is not as simple as he indicated and that is the reason the inquiry was commenced under the mandatory provisions of the act. It was so serious as to threaten a strike at the beginning of the following year.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman, there are some very amusing things taking place this afternoon. I listened with great interest to the initial remarks of the hon. member for Vancouver Centre. I understood him to say firmly and definitely, "Yes, this should be a permanent part of the legislation." After he was duly impressed by the Minister of Justice he then said, "Well, maybe it should be a permanent part of the legislation." Then after a while he quietly and meekly said, "How about to 1964?"

This sort of weaseling on the part of the Liberal party is quite in keeping with its general practice and attitude on these things. Either the Liberal party believes in what it says, or it does not. We are here simply to determine whether or not we desire to protect the inherent rights of the working people, the fishermen in this case.

An hon. Member: Oh, oh.

Mr. Howard: You may not think you are here for that purpose, but that is my conception of what we are trying to do in this particular amendment that is before us. Second, with respect to this question of whether or not collective agreements are exempt from the provisions of the Combines Investigation Act—

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Mr. Cameron (High Park): Mr. Chairman, I rise on a question of privilege.

Mr. Howard:—that is a matter which—

The Chairman: Order. The hon. member for High Park is rising on a question of privilege.

Mr. Cameron (High Park): Mr. Chairman, on a question of privilege, I object to the word used by the hon. member. It is very objectionable to me and I think it is very objectionable to all hon. members on this side of the chamber. I refer to the word "weaseling" used by the hon. member for Skeena. I would ask you, Mr. Chairman, to rule on that, because it is a very objectionable thing to say to any hon. member of any party, that they are weaseling on any matter he is debating. If the Minister of Justice has been able to convince the hon. member for Vancouver Centre that there is more to this argument than the hon. member thought there was in the first instance, I think that is no reason for the hon. member for Skeena using such an objectionable word. Furthermore, I think it is quite unparliamentary.

Mr. Byrne: On the same question of privilege, I think it is irresponsible for the hon. member to say such a thing. If ever I saw any weaseling it was on the part of that group when they supported the Tory government not long ago.

The Chairman: Order. I address myself to the point of order raised on the issue of relevancy, because the hon. member was not dealing specifically with the clause under consideration in committee. As to the use of the word "weaseling" I can recall hearing it used before, and as long as it has not got a specific application I do not think I can find it to be unparliamentary.

Mr. Howard: I use the word specifically, Mr. Chairman. I meant it to apply specifically to the Liberal party. As to whether or not what I was saying was relevant, I would merely point out I was dealing with the same questions as were dealt with in the exchange of views between the Minister of Justice, the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate and the hon. member for Vancouver Centre. Surely, if they were relevant when those hon. members were discussing them they are equally relevant when I am doing so.

The Minister of Justice, apparently on an invitation to give a legal interpretation—an interpretation which, I understand, he is not competent to give within the rules of the house—

An hon. Member: Or elsewhere.