

9-10 EDWARD VII., A. 1910

Mr. MACDONELL.—Prof. Skelton is only dealing with enacted laws, now he is coming to deal with the Bills that were brought in.

The CHAIRMAN.—He has been dealing with actual legislation.

Prof. SKELTON.—Are there any further queries or suggestions as to looking up further information on the scope of the actual legislation?

Mr. MACDONELL.—Right on that point? I can see better the very great importance of as far as possible getting on definite lines.

The CHAIRMAN.—As to the extent of the application?

Mr. MACDONELL.—As to the extent of the application. Take for instance a harbour, take Toronto or Montreal harbour, the government has its own dredging plants and have been dredging there with a couple of their big dredges. I can understand this Act would apply to workmen on these dredges doing that work. But supposing a few yards away, or a mile or so away, they have let a contract for dredging another part of the very same harbour to a contractor. The Act apparently does not apply to him.

The CHAIRMAN.—And further the government might have let a contract for the building of a dredge. Would it apply to that?

Mr. MACDONELL.—No, the Act would not apply there according to the professor. Therefore, it becomes of very great importance to explain to the committee the exact lines the legislation has gone on. If you, Prof. Skelton, could clean cut, so to speak, the limitations of the extent of the law, it would be most useful.

The CHAIRMAN.—If you could get an authoritative expression of opinion from some competent source at Washington also in that connection it would be desirable.

Prof. SKELTON.—I might say that I have communicated with several authorities at Washington and have some statements as to the limits of the law; the opinions of the officials of the Bureau of Labour, the evidence submitted by the various members of the other departments who carry on work and who have contracts with contractors, and the decisions of the various federal courts—

Mr. SMITH.—That is very important.

Prof. SKELTON.—Laying down cases to which the law should or should not apply. If desired I can put that in as definite form if possible for the information of the Committee later. (*See Exhibit A. (4).*)

Mr. MACDONELL.—They may have some handy manual issued for the information of contractors and other persons dealing with the government containing in some brief form the effect of their legislation.

EXTENT OF BILL No. 21, APPLICABLE TO CONTRACTS.

Mr. SMITH.—Let me put this question to you: do you think this Bill would apply to a private party who had a contract to furnish supplies to the government.

Prof. SKELTON.—You mean the Bill before us?

Mr. SMITH.—Yes.

Prof. SKELTON.—I should think so, because it is of much broader scope than the American law.

Mr. SMITH.—Supposing the government made a contract with a grocer to furnish groceries. Would that compel that grocer to conduct his business generally on an eight hour basis?

Prof. SKELTON.—It would compel him to operate that part of his business which is concerned in supplying the Government contract on the eight hour basis, I should imagine, whether or not it would compel him to carry on all the rest of his business in the same way. That is the point on which a great deal of evidence was submitted before the American committee which I shall present.

Mr. SMITH.—You will find that is the great difficulty at the foundation of this whole matter, and how impossible it will be to dissociate one part of the business

PROF. SKELTON.