

Canada Labour Code

[Translation]

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): Yes, Mr. Speaker, the consultations bore fruit: we have expressed our agreement.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: It is, then, the intention that an order of the House be made that upon entering into debate at this time on Bill C-8, which is now at the report stage, report stage and third reading would be concluded in a period of not longer than four hours. Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Mr. MacEachen: Now, Mr. Speaker, perhaps we could call, in accordance with the agreement earlier entered into, the second reading of Bill C-29 to amend the Farm Credit Act. I am calling it on the understanding it will be passed without debate and sent to the committee.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

FARM CREDIT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed, from Monday, March 20, consideration of the Motion of Mr. Whelan that Bill C-29, to amend the Farm Credit Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Parliament lives!

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CANADA LABOUR CODE

AMENDMENTS TO CERTAIN SECTIONS OF THE ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-8, to amend the Canada Labour Code, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration.

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt) moved:

Motion No. 1.

—That Bill C-8, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code, be amended in Clause 28 by

(a) striking out line 21 at page 19

(b) striking out line 31 at page 19 and substituting the following therefor:

“to the safety or health of the employee; and

[Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton)]

(c) imminent danger to the health and safety of an employee includes a condition in any place where any radiation safety level set by either the federal or provincial government has been exceeded.”

He said: Mr. Speaker, I want to put forward very briefly my reasons for seeking to amend this particular clause. The amendment would put in place the right of workers to refuse work in circumstances where their health or safety is in danger.

While the bill covers workers who are under federal jurisdiction, there is one group of workers who have consistently been caught in a jurisdictional jungle. I refer to the uranium workers, those who work in the refineries or processing plants as well as to those who work in the mines. They may come within the scope of regulations set by a federal agency, the Atomic Energy Control Board, or they may come under provincial jurisdiction since the provinces also set safety standards. Inspectors who attempt to enforce regulations are invariably caught in an administrative jungle. The mine owners claim on occasion that they are under provincial rather than federal jurisdiction—or they may argue the reverse depending upon which safety standards are less stringent. This whole question of jurisdiction in the field of safety will become increasingly contentious, and now is the time to eliminate some of these jurisdictional quarrels wherever possible. It seems to me the best way to do this is to say to the workers, “It does not matter who sets the safety standards; whichever safety level is the more stringent is the one you may insist upon.” This is the first step to be taken in eliminating at least some of the underbrush from this regulatory jungle.

● (1232)

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, we have had consultations with the hon. member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) and we are essentially in agreement. I believe the official opposition is in agreement also, as there have been discussions with the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser). I wonder if this motion could stand for a few minutes in order that I may double-check the precise wording because some changes have been made. I am prepared to elaborate on them now, but as a result of our discussions we are having it put in precise form referring to the precise clauses that are to be amended. These will be put on the hon. member's desk. I am sure he will agree with them and agree that they reflect the discussion. If we could have some time for that type of verification, I would appreciate it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. members have heard the suggestion of the minister. If hon. members agree, I suggest we suspend discussion on motion No. 1 and go to motion No. 2 in the name of the hon. member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez). Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt) moved:

Motion No. 2.