

my town and employers who go to Manpower offices know a great deal, personally, about persons who are available for work. The same holds true of employees. The people of my community have access to a great deal of personal information.

Obviously, the minister cannot look after all the Manpower centres across the country. This means that his officials, including many small officials in lesser positions, will have to make these decisions. I therefore think it is most important for the word "reasonably" to be inserted in the clause. It would provide a defence against prosecution if certain officials consider that information which ought to be made available to them has not been made available.

I think the amendment is important from the point of view of personal privacy. This applies particularly to areas which are relatively small where the people know a great deal about each other. For this reason it is most important that the amendment be incorporated in the bill. The amendment would blunt administrative and bureaucratic trust and prevent officials from being overzealous. I think it is a useful amendment and hope the minister will accept it.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, several speakers, including the mover of the motion, have indicated that they think there is not a great deal of difference between the bill as it stands and as it would stand if amended. According to one interpretation, that could be so. There is, however, a possible significant difference, if the amendment means anything. The amendment would tend to transfer—the mover of the motion said this—the decision as to what information should be made available to the courts and away from the minister.

Mr. Alexander: That is the difference.

Mr. Lang: The difference, if taken that way, is fairly important. I urge hon. members not to support the amendment when viewed in that light. The information is collected so that it is available for providing a service. It would be undesirable if the placing of that information in a particular spot became subject to judicial argument instead of simply to political argument that could quite properly follow if the proper service is not being provided.

The objective of the department in this connection is to provide the maximum level of service. If there is a grievance, it can be brought to the attention of a Member of Parliament and in that way be brought to the attention of the department. Actually, a political or ombudsmanlike remedy through a Member of Parliament is available. Secondly, the amendment would affect the statute.

There is the additional difficulty that we are dealing with confidential information and in certain circumstances it could be important for the minister to assure the person giving the information about any extension of that information beyond the employees of the department. The minister would not be in the position to give that assurance if the amendment carried because we

Unemployment Insurance Act, 1971

would, in effect, be substituting a judicial decision for the decision which he could make.

I emphasize that this is part of a service which is meant to be provided. The best assurance is the determination of the department to provide that service as well as the kind of control which exists through Members of Parliament and through the minister. I therefore urge hon. members not to accept the amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): The question is on motion No. 16, in the name of the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander). Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): The vote on this motion stands deferred.

The House will now consider motions Nos. 18 and 19, standing in the name of the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Barnett). First we will take motion No. 18. These motions will be debated together and the vote on motion No. 18 will dispose of motion No. 19.

The hon. member for Comox-Alberni moves motion No. 18 as follows:

That Bill C-229, an act respecting unemployment insurance in Canada, be amended by deleting subclause 2 of clause 146, in lines 27 to 31 at page 94 and lines 1 to 3 at page 95.

Also, the hon. member for Comox-Alberni moves motion No. 19 as follows:

That Bill C-229, an act respecting unemployment insurance in Canada, be amended by deleting subclause 3 of clause 146, in lines 4 and 5 at page 95.

• (3:30 p.m.)

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I believe the purpose of these two amendments will be apparent at once. I am happy they are being considered together because they are part and parcel of the same thing. Arrangements for covering fishermen are, regrettably in my opinion, contained in part VIII of the act which is headed "Transitional and Repeal Provisions". The effect of my amendments would be to place arrangements