

we thought we ought to proceed with these amendments by way of legislation, taking the house fully into our confidence. In view of the objections taken last night to this course of procedure I have referred to the Department of Justice the several points raised, particularly by the hon. member for St. Lawrence-St. George (Mr. Cahan). The law officers of the crown advise us that we can proceed with the necessary amendments to the Combines Investigation Act under the War Measures Act. That being so, and having regard to the desire of the government to avoid as far as possible introducing any controversial legislation at this session, we have decided to withdraw this bill and proceed with such amendments of the combines act as may be required as time goes on under the provisions of the War Measures Act.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the house that the hon. Minister of Labour shall have leave to withdraw the bill?

Mr. A. A. HEAPS (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Rogers) has stated that because of certain representations made last evening he now proposes to withdraw this bill. Some members of the house are not in favour of that course being followed. Personally, I think that when the house is in session all the legislation which the government seeks to put into effect should be brought down and passed upon by the house. In years gone by, objections were raised, particularly by hon. members to my right, to the government proceeding by order in council at a time when the house was in session.

There is strong resentment throughout the country against the increase in prices of everyday commodities of life. It is possible that in this proposed legislation is to be found the means of curbing those who would attempt to profit by the existing war prices. We are given the impression that by withdrawing these amendments to the Combines Investigation Act the government are weakening in their effort or desire to put a stop to war profiteering. If the house were not in session I could well understand the desire of the government or the desire of the opposition to see that action was taken under the War Measures Act, but I contend that the democratic method of procedure is to proceed by way of legislation when the house is in session. There is no excuse for the government's withdrawing legislation of this kind simply because some hon. members happen to be opposed to it. It may be that this legislation can be described as contentious, but if there is to be a real effort on the part of the government to curb profiteering I cannot see why such a

measure as this can be called contentious. I doubt if there is a single member in this house who does not desire that profiteering be curbed with the least possible delay.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I thought the hon. member intended to make only a few remarks. I had put the motion and I thought it was carried.

Mr. HEAPS: It was not carried. I have every desire to expedite the business of the house, but—

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion is not debatable.

Mr. HEAPS: If the motion is not debatable, then I must bow to your ruling.

Mr. SPEAKER: I allowed the hon. member to speak because I thought he had only a few remarks to make. If he is going on to make a lengthy speech, then I must call him to order.

Mr. HEAPS: I should like to know whether it is debatable or not debatable.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not debatable.

Mr. HEAPS: If it is not debatable, then I am out of order. I do want to say that I protest against the withdrawal of this bill.

Mr. ROGERS: With the consent of the house, I really believe the point raised by my hon. friend ought to be answered immediately. Let me assure him that the matter at issue is simply one of procedure and not one of intention. We are advised by the law officers of the crown that under the War Measures Act we have the power to proceed with the amendments which are necessary to make the Combines Investigation Act effective in time of war. Let me assure my hon. friend that this is our intention, to make the Combines Investigation Act effective in time of war and to take whatever steps may be necessary to curb profiteering at this time.

Bill withdrawn.

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL PROPOSALS PRESENTED BY THE ACTING MINISTER OF FINANCE

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister) moved:

That Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair for the house to go into committee of ways and means.

Hon. J. L. ILSLEY (Acting Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, it is a matter of universal regret that since the presentation of the last budget the Hon. Mr. Dunning, the then Minister of Finance, has been obliged to resign by reason of ill health. Sufficient time