

on the international shipping conferences which are being provided with exemptions under the Combines Investigation Act.

Since the amendment does not involve any major upheaval or problems in respect of the rest of the bill, and does not throw any handicap in the way of its immediate implementation—in fact, I think it speeds up its implementation—I hope the minister will agree that the amendment is worthy of his sympathy, attention and consideration and that he will accept it on behalf of the government.

Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to speak at any length on the hon. member's amendment in which he expresses a desire to change the meaning of the word "commission" in the definition section of Bill C-184 so that it will mean the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission. I have some doubts about the full effect of his amendment because it is my understanding that the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission operates under the Combines Investigation Act, and the purpose of this bill is to exempt certain shipping conferences from the provisions of the Combines Investigation Act. I doubt whether the amendment is in order to begin with and, like the hon. member, I have some doubt that the Canadian Transport Commission has not shown any real desire up to this time to concern itself with the public interest. I would prefer to take the other avenue suggested in my amendment, that we go further and force the Canadian Transport Commission to concern itself with the public interest.

In my opinion, the two amendments are conflicting and therefore I very much regret that we will not be able to support the amendment for changing the commission to the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission. There seems to be some doubt as to the purpose of the amendment itself and I believe it is in conflict with my amendment, which will be dealt with later.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, in supporting the amendment that has been put forth by my hon. colleague, it seems to me very realistic to suggest that those people who were formerly vested with the authority to police the regulations under this particular act should still be given the authority to put some teeth into the regulations. I am sure in the testimony given before

Shipping Conferences Exemption Act

the standing committee it was pointed out very well that conferences are cartels and that this is universally recognized. It seems to me that if we are to give any authority the power to deal with the situation, it should be left in the hands of those people who had it previously. It would seem to me, Mr. Speaker, that there is no suggestion the two amendments now being proposed are in conflict with each other. The amendment proposed by my hon. colleague clearly spells out the fact that it will give jurisdiction over this particular piece of legislation to the Combines Investigation Act and to the commission that would police that particular act.

I think it is only proper that we look at the situation as it has existed. We know the Canadian Transport Commission does not have the tools to police this particular legislation. If they do not have the tools, then we must have some authority vested with the power to impose certain restrictions upon the conferences if we see fit, and particularly if the commission sees fit.

I agree with my colleague that there have been circumstances where we could question whether or not the Canadian Transport Commission is really looking after interests of the people of Canada or the interests of those individual shippers in Canada who are not part of the conferences, and whether they are taking these into consideration when trying to determine the regulations under this particular piece of legislation.

In all sincerity, I believe that the amendment proposed by my hon. colleague is in order and should receive the backing of this House at this time. I am certain that the Combines Investigation Commission could police the regulations and could at least pay particular attention to some of the suggestions coming from the conference. I am frightened to think that the Canadian Transport Commission may police the regulations, as I believe the conference would be able to get to the CTC and in that way do things not in the interests of the general public of Canada or of the shippers of Canada.

● (4:10 p.m.)

I support the amendment 100 per cent, Mr. Speaker. I had hoped the minister would explain to this House why he and the cabinet are not in favour of leaving this piece of legislation under the Combines Investigation Act, but it appears that he is prepared to let the Canadian Transport Commission have jurisdiction even though he may realize they do not have the tools to do the job. They are