

Private Bills

Mr. Deputy Speaker: There is no consent.

Mr. Knowles: Let us try two hours.

Mr. Hellyer: When you indicated there were no unanimous consent to the consideration of supply through the supper hour, was it Your Honour's belief that some objection had been raised from the opposition to your left?

Mr. Starr: That is right. He does not have to ask you. He saw it, definitely, and you are only trying to make politically whatever you can out of this.

Mr. Diefenbaker: The insolence of the minister.

Mr. Starr: Another example of his arrogance.

Mr. Hellyer: I could not believe members opposite would want to hold up the pay of the civil service and the armed forces.

Mr. Starr: Keep that up and you will be here for a long time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Perhaps this is a good opportunity for the house to proceed with private members' business.

PRIVATE BILLS**PACIFIC COAST FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY**

The house in committee on Bill No. S-6 respecting the Pacific Coast Fire Insurance Company—Mr. Basford—Mr. Batten in the Chair.

On clause 1—*Change of name.*

Mr. Howard: I suppose it makes some sense to somebody that we should now be dealing with matters relating to the private business of an insurance company rather than with the business of the Canadian people. But it sure as hell does not make sense to me.

An hon. Member: Why not go for supper?

Mr. Howard: No, I do not want to go for supper. I want to stay and deal with this committee business.

Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for Lisgar is impeding my consideration of this bill by making inane observations which reach me, but nobody else.

Mr. Muir (Lisgar): The hon. member was hungry a few minutes ago.

Mr. Howard: And I am still hungry, there is no gainsaying it. I merely made a passing

comment, but it does not seem sensible that we should not be dealing with interim supply, which concerns public business, and that instead we should be occupying ourselves with the private affairs of a small, select group of people who want permission from this house to establish private practices which they would like to pursue in the insurance field. This particular application relates to the Pacific Coast Insurance Company, and I should like to comment on the bill which is now before us.

At the outset, let me say that this bill has had a strange progress so far. In one way it can be compared with the bill relating to the unification of the armed forces against which members of the Conservative party have railed. The principal objection raised by the Conservative party to the armed forces bill is that they do not want to be obliged to consider the second reading because they do not feel they have had an opportunity to get full information, or any information, about its contents, its purpose and so on from the sponsor of the measure. Hearing no objection, I presume that what I have said is correct.

It seems to me that a comparison can be drawn between that armed forces bill and the position in which the committee finds itself now with regard to Bill S-6. In the first place, when Bill S-6 was given second reading—and, incidentally, the Conservative party supported second reading—the house was given no explanation whatever about its purposes. In fact, the hon. member who moved the second reading of the bill, the hon. member for Lethbridge, was not only not the sponsor of the bill but I am inclined to believe he did not even have authority to move his motion. So the house was in the position of being asked to endorse a bill, without any explanation of its content or purpose having been given. As I say, this is comparable to the situation in which the Conservative party claims it is placed in respect of the armed forces unification bill.

We did get an explanation on second reading, though, from the sponsor of the bill, the hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard, but only after we had reached the stage at which, by speaking, he would close the debate.

This, I thought, was like putting the cart before the horse, because it left us in a position where we were unable to comment on what had been said by the sponsor in explanation of the purpose of the bill. But he did get it across to us finally. I do not say this in any unkind way. I understand the awkward