

Mr. MARCIL: I have heard numerous complaints that purchasers, when they buy a package, do not know what amount it contains. This applies to many different varieties of food, as well as to soaps and things of that kind. Sometimes the packages are found to be half empty, and the purchaser does not know whether the package was intended to be that way or whether the quantity has been reduced because of an increase in the price. Any action towards securing full value for the consumer's money should be welcomed, because nothing is more unfair than to have to pay for what you do not get. In Quebec we have had a constant grievance with regard to potatoes. When you want to buy a ninety-pound bag of potatoes at a reduced price you would sometimes find the bag to contain only eighty pounds—and so on. Any legislation that the minister can enforce to remedy such grievances as these will, I am sure, meet with the unanimous support of this House, especially at a time like this, when the problem of the cost of living is such a pressing one. I, for one, will support any step that the minister takes in that direction.

Mr. VERVILLE: Will this apply to other things than food in packages—to vegetables, or things of that kind?

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: It does not apply to fruit or vegetables.

Mr. VERVILLE: The people are being robbed, more in the matter of vegetables and eggs than in regard to anything else that I know of. The grocer often sells his small eggs at the regular price and charges five cents a dozen more for the larger ones.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: That is in Montreal.

Mr. VERVILLE: I think I can point to similar instances in my hon. friend's city. Toronto is not behind in that respect. It is desirable that all these things should be sold by the pound.

Mr. MARCIL: It is so in the United States and France.

Mr. VERVILLE: I agree with the member for Bonaventure (Mr. Marcil) that bags of potatoes containing eighty pounds are often sold for ninety-pound bags. As a matter of fact, a man selling potatoes will often say to the purchaser: I cannot sell by the pound; I am selling by the bag. The consumer, then, has to buy by the bag, and sometimes he finds that the weight is short.

Turnips and many other articles of the kind are sold by the pound, to the satisfaction of the grocer or merchant. I call special attention to the matter of eggs, because if the minister will get a little information from some of his officers, he will find that the people are robbed more in regard to eggs than in regard to anything else.

Mr. PUGSLEY: I am disposed to accept the principle involved in this resolution, to a reasonable extent. I think, however, that the Bill founded upon the resolution will lead to all kinds of trouble. I do not think that simply because in some instances grocers are dishonest, we should resort to extreme legislation. My experience is not so unfortunate as that of some hon. gentlemen who have spoken. Every retailer that I have had to deal with has been honest.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: Was somebody else buying for you?

Mr. PUGSLEY: I buy a great deal by telephone, and I have not had any reason to complain. I am surprised that hon. gentlemen have been treated as they suggest. My suggestion is that they change their grocer; they might get over the difficulty by dealing with somebody else. In the city from which I come there has been, so far as I know, every disposition to deal fairly with the buying public. Under this Bill, the grocer or merchant with whom you are dealing by telephone has to put his name and the quantity upon every package of goods that he sends out. If you order by telephone ten yards of cotton, for instance, it is put in a package and the merchant has to mark upon the package the number of yards of cotton contained therein. The same applies to any article of dress; he must put the number of yards on the package. It is provided that the merchant must designate the weight, measure or quantity of any article which is included in a package which is ordered either by letter or by telephone. Surely the minister does not want to impose such a bother upon the retail dry goods dealer or the retail grocer. If I choose to go to the store myself and make the purchase or have someone go on my behalf, compliance with these provisions will not be necessary, but if I order by telephone the merchant with whom I deal must comply with the law in every particular. If it is desirable that such a provision should apply to potatoes, butter, bread, meat, those commodities should be specifically named. But do not make this provision so broad that it will apply to