

Mr. BENNETT: If that be so it might unjustly affect the whole arrangement that had been made. Hence my suggestion that it should not be proceeded with at least until another season. Then business will be transacted on the basis of the tax and prices will be regulated accordingly. If the difficulty that presented itself to his mind has been cured, as the minister says, then clearly there should not be much trouble on that score. If the danger exists no longer there should be no more difficulty in regard to it.

Mr. KELLNER: There may be considerable dissatisfaction with the transient trader. I should like to suggest to the minister that he go into the library and consult the record of what the Hudson's Bay Company did at the time it had control of the whole of that territory. I want to point out to the minister that in collecting the tax in the way suggested there will be quite a lot of points where it will be absolutely impossible for the residents to sell their furs at all because there is no office at which a tax can be paid. I do not for the life of me see how the trappers are going to dispose of their furs unless they come out to the main centres, which will mean a trip of several hundreds of miles. I think it will involve unnecessary hardship to many trappers in the district. I have been asked to oppose this measure, but I shall say nothing further at the present stage beyond urging that this legislation be seriously considered before it is passed.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I think my hon. friend is unduly alarmed. I have a pretty good idea from whom the opposition to the bill is coming. To some of these men we have refused to issue a license altogether because of the manner in which they have treated the natives in the territories. We do not want to make fur operations expensive, but we do want to know who are in the business. After all very few trappers bring their packs down to the city of Edmonton to dispose of them, although some of them do. The legitimate trappers are well known, their reputation is good, and they will not be subjected to any undue hardship in connection with the payment of the tax. I wish to move, in order to meet the objections of my hon. friend (Mr. Bennett) that the act shall not go into force until January, 1928.

Mr. BENNETT: That would cover the season of 1928.

Mr. McGIBBON: What will the license fees be? Will the amount be the same in all cases?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): They are not the same. They are less for a Canadian.

Mr. McGIBBON: What about the fees for non-residents?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): They are pretty high.

Mr. BENNETT: I understand the minister proposes a tax of 5 per cent?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): It is approximately that. It is on a basis of so much per pelt.

Mr. BENNETT: How is the minister going to fix the basis of the price of the pelt?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): On the present price it is approximately 5 per cent. If fur goes up in price, it would be less. If fur goes down, it would be more. We have authority to change it from time to time.

Mr. BENNETT: Does the minister propose to fix it as a set charge per pelt?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Yes. We must do it in that way.

Mr. BENNETT: I understand it is impossible to do it otherwise, because if you do it on a valuation basis, you would have all kinds of complications.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): It is so much per pelt. It is approximately 5 per cent on present prices. If prices go down, we have authority to reduce the tax and if prices go up, we have authority to increase it.

Mr. BENNETT: It is in the form of a specific tax per pelt?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Yes.

Section agreed to.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I move that there be added as clause 2:

2. This act shall come into effect on the 1st day of January, 1928.

Section agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

WEST INDIES TRADE AGREEMENT

ORGANIZATION OF COMPANY TO PROVIDE STEAMSHIP SERVICE

Hon. CHARLES A. DUNNING (Minister of Railways) moved the second reading of Bill No. 142, respecting the Canadian National steamships, and to provide for the establishment of West Indies service.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time, and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Johnston in the chair.