

Resources, where officials of the department and others concerned could fully explain it. Then, if the bill were reported back from committee, the honourable senator would have full opportunity to make further representation against it.

Hon. Arthur W. Roebuck: The honourable senator from Provencher (Hon. Mr. Beaubien) accuses the honourable member from Waterloo (Hon. Mr. Euler) of opposing this bill purely in the interest of margarine.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: Pardon me! Please do not put words in my mouth. It was not an accusation.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Well, then, it was an allegation. It seemed to me that the gentleman from Provencher advocated the passing of the bill purely in the support of his own attitude with respect to margarine. If that is so, it would appear to me that the proper way to deal with the matter would be to legislate on margarine as margarine, and not in this backhand way—

Hon. Mr. Horner: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Euler: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: —of giving the executive powers that are both vicious and unprecedented.

My honourable friends all know the position I take with regard to margarine. When I say that I am not much influenced by the effect of this bill upon margarine as a single commodity, the house will of course remember that I was in favour of allowing the consumers of our cities, towns and farms to use this product if they so desired. I oppose, as I always do, the attempt of any single class, for their own financial good, to restrict the liberties of the public in general. I do not care whether the people in this class are on the farms or in the cities. I always take that stand. I am not concealing in any way my views about margarine, or changing them in any way; neither am I entirely disregarding just what, in my judgment, this bill is designed to do with respect to margarine. It is a back-door method of attacking the problem, in the interests of the government of one particular province. This bill might far better be described as an Act for the relief of Mr. Duplessis—

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, oh.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: —than for an Act for the establishment of national standards for dairy products. Perhaps it could be just as well designated as an Act to facilitate the Minister of Agriculture in his political manoeuvres as between provinces. In all events it is entirely vicious.

The member for Waterloo (Hon. Mr. Euler) has not overstated his case; in fact, with his usual modesty he has understated it. As I have said, I am not so much interested in the effect of this bill upon margarine as I am in its general principle. The honourable senator from Provencher would have us give second reading to the bill so that it could be referred to some committee where officials from the department could be heard. I should like to hear from the minister myself, but I do not think that can be done. It is on the second reading of a bill that the principle is discussed—

Hon. Mr. Euler: Certainly.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: —and it is because I am opposed to the principle of this bill that I could not bring myself to vote for second reading for any mere procedural reason.

I am opposed to the principle of this bill because, when Canada was formed, the rights of the provinces to impose direct taxation were expressly restricted, and the power to tax indirectly was kept from them. This was done for the express purpose of preventing the erection of tariff walls between our provinces. It was because we did not want Canada divided up into small packages with trade obstructions between them that we adopted the kind of Act we did in 1867. Because of that right of free trade among our provinces, Canada has gradually grown to the great nation she now is. The same thing has been said in this chamber during this present session about our great neighbour to the south: because of the absence of inter-state obstructions to trade, the United States has grown to be the most powerful and wealthy nation upon the earth.

Here, perhaps for the mere ulterior purpose of attacking oleomargarine, we are handing to the executive of Canada the right to prohibit the exchange between provinces of all articles described in this bill as dairy products. We are "Balkanizing" the Dominion of Canada and dividing it up into small jurisdictions of trade. This is enough to ruin the country over which we preside.

I am opposed to this bill on the grounds of the deepest of principles. As a patriotic Canadian I cannot agree to a proposition like this, no matter what financial interests may be involved. Expediency has nothing to do with this question except the expediency of nationality and the preservation of Canada as one economic unit. Were we to pass this bill today and give the executive the right to control the passage of these articles from one province to another, how long will it be before we are asked to authorize the government to control interprovincial trade in other commodities? How long will it be