

APPENDIX No. 3

By Mr. Smith (Nanaimo):

Q. What do you think is the sentiment among organized labour with regard to the question of co-operation in Canada?—A. I do not think organized labour in Canada has given a great deal of thought to the matter. I think the co-operative movement in certain parts of Canada—for example, in Cape Breton and out in your part of the country, Nanaimo, where there are men from the old country who have seen the movement in the country from which they came—might receive the endorsement of organized labour. In other centres, I think, where the labouring men are not familiar with co-operation, they have not really taken up the subject to any extent. The letter I read to the committee this morning in connection with the Guelph bakery shows that the Trades and Labour Council of Guelph, to whom the whole co-operative movement was something new, have become familiar with one of its phases, and, having adopted it, are pleased to carry it on.

Q. You know that in England and Scotland, where there are both trades organizations and co-operative societies, the latter movement has been very closely allied with trades unionism?—A. Quite so.

Q. Men in the trades union movement are leading in the co-operative movement?—A. That is what I meant when I said a moment ago, you would have the same body of men who had formed the trades and labour associations organizing into one of these credit associations for the purpose of assisting each other in that way. I think the trade union movement and the co-operative movement have been the two great movements of the past century for benefiting and bettering the condition of the working classes. I do not give that as an individual opinion merely; I base it on the authority of men who have given the subject the most careful consideration. Prof. Alfred Marshall for example, who has written perhaps the best book on political economy which has been published in the last ten years, speaks in the strongest terms of the co-operative and trade union movement as being a great movement for the betterment of the conditions of the working people.

By Mr. Verville:

Q. The credit and loan feature of the Bill could easily be established in cities?—A. Certainly. The Bill, I think, as I have read it, would permit of credit societies being formed.

Q. In all our large cities it is impossible for the working people to live in the central parts, because this place is required for manufacturing purposes; they have to go out into suburban districts. They would like to have their own dwellings, but the trouble is they cannot realize sufficient money. Under the Bill it will be possible for them to get money for this purpose, and it would be money loaned by their own fellow-workingmen. I live in a part of the city where the residents are all working people; there is nobody poor and nobody rich. They are often handicapped for the want of a little capital, and when they need money they have probably to rap at the door of some shaver. Once they get into the hands of the note shaver they have to stay there. This Bill would prevent all that?—A. I think the Bill would deal a blow at the usurer. I think it would cut into the heart of his practice, where he has been gaining his profits through taking advantage of the necessities of individuals who want to carry on legitimate work. I have no doubt, however, the usurer would still have a field for men who wanted to raise funds for improper purposes; but where money was required for legitimate business, particularly of the kind that you have mentioned, Mr. Verville, men wishing to build houses for themselves, they would be able to obtain credit from one another, simply because they were known.

Q. Taking a city like Montreal, one of the largest cities in Canada, you understand the strength of trade unionism in a country and the amount of money which labour men could put aside every year—they could easily raise annually \$25,000 if they desired—you must acknowledge that by co-operation they could put large sums aside