

*Cold Storage Act*

Mr. ANDERSON: The words are used here, "properly constituted co-operative societies or associations." What is the minister's idea of a properly constituted co-operative society?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Well, there are differences of opinion as to what constitutes co-operation. Some people take the ground that ordinary joint stock companies with benevolent intention may be looked upon as co-operative, and frequently they are so classed—not without jurisdiction. Strictly speaking, a co-operative organization is one which distributes at least part of its profits. But the intention is to make the definition elastic. If we make a rigid definition in the act we may find that it will not apply to certain enterprises that may be quite worthy. The matter will be determined, therefore, by regulations that are flexible and may be changed from time to time.

Mr. BRISTOL: Will incorporated companies be shut out by this amendment?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Joint stock companies?

Mr. BRISTOL: Yes.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Not necessarily. That will be a proper subject for consideration by the committee—whether a co-operative concern may be defined as a body organized in the ordinary way under the Companies Act.

Mr. BRISTOL: I think incorporated companies are excluded now.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Everything is excluded now except municipal plants—though not, of course, in the original act.

Mr. HODGINS: Are the provinces giving any assistance along this line?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Not that I know of. Perhaps some of the members from British Columbia would be better able to answer that. I believe that the British Columbia government has assisted the fruit industry by certain loans, but I do not think any subsidies are paid. Hon. Manning Doherty, of Ontario, has it in mind to introduce a bill—if indeed, he has not already done so—providing for provincial assistance to cold storage plants by way of loan, but not, I believe, by way of subsidy.

Mr. CHAPLIN: If this resolution carries in its present form, how will it be possible in committee to enlarge it to include incorporated companies? It seems to me we should insert the words "or other companies" so that the Committee on Agriculture will have power to enlarge it if they see fit.

[Mr. Motherwell.]

Mr. MOTHERWELL: That is a proper question, but the idea is not to tie ourselves down to anything too specific. The explanation now being given is of a general character, and the details can be dealt with either in the Committee on Agriculture, or later in Committee of the Whole. I think it is the custom, as a matter of expediency, to first introduce a resolution that is to be the basis of a bill. As to the details I do not think we should be tied right down hard and fast at this stage. The bill itself is ready, I think.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I submit, Mr. Chairman, that if this resolution passes we are absolutely debarred from enlarging the scope of the bill.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: That is not my understanding. I have often wondered why it was necessary to introduce a resolution at all, because you have to go over the same ground on the second reading, but we have to follow this procedure as a matter of parliamentary practice. However, the passage of the resolution is not supposed to tie us down in the matter of the changing of the bill at a subsequent stage. The second reading of a bill simply expresses the approval of the House on the general principles embodied in the measure. Then you go into committee and the details of the bill are dealt with. That is the procedure as I understand it.

Mr. HODGINS: I would draw attention to the expense which the proposed legislation will involve if it is taken advantage of all over the country. It has always seemed to me that it is our duty to provide for terminal facilities, but to make provision for co-operative associations all over the country will involve tremendous expense.

Mr. TOLMIE: The cold storage principle has rendered valuable service in connection with our range beef production in the West, and is of great utility at the present time in connection with our fruit industry, particularly as regards shipments for a distance where it is necessary to pre-cool the fruit. I would ask the minister to define the kind of company whose business would be of sufficient importance to entitle it to a grant. How many tons output would he consider necessary before such a company could receive aid?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: In the past the act has provided that mechanical storage must be supplied. The cubic contents of the building has not been defined nor yet the total cost upon which to base the subsidy.