

*Customs Tariff***FISHERIES AND FORESTRY**REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE OF ANNUAL REPORT
OF FRESHWATER FISH MARKETING CORPORATION

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (for the Minister of State (Fisheries)) moved:

That the annual report of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation for the year 1973-74, tabled February 11, 1975, be referred to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry for the purpose of hearing representations from the Fundy Weir Fisherman's Association, New Brunswick, and the Independent Gill Net Fishermen of northern Manitoba.

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the government House leader a question before the House disposes of this item. Would the government House leader consult with his colleagues, the Minister of State (Fisheries) (Mr. LeBlanc), and the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouellet), with a view to having the very excellent report on the state of the fishing industry and the price of fish in Canada made by the Food Prices Review Board also referred to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry?

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): It being six o'clock I do now leave the chair until eight o'clock this evening.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CUSTOMS TARIFF (No. 3)

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Sharp (for the Minister of Finance) that Bill C-67, to amend the Customs Tariff (No.3), be read the second time and referred to committee of the whole.

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Kootenay): Mr. Speaker, I rise to say a few words regarding the customs tariff bill before us, and I should like to deal particularly with the first item on the list and the decision by the minister to lift the levy on hymn books, printed music, and prayer books. I feel this is a move that will be welcomed across the country.

This move may be taken as an indication that the government is realizing how seriously inflation affects the institutions of this land, and I cannot think of any which are being affected more than the churches across the country. These churches through the years have had programs which tended to take the load off government, and I realize this has not always been appreciated. Some groups that will be most affected by this particular move are of that old fashioned and stubborn quality who insist on

[Mr. Sharp.]

taking care of their own and refuse to allow any of their people to become a charge on the government. Some of them even turn back family allowances, and many of them take care of their aged. Some of the larger churches have even seen fit to enter into arrangements with CMHC with respect to residences for the aged. The move we have here is a small but an important move, and one that will be appreciated by churches and their congregations throughout the country.

This move might be taken as an indication that the hymnal recently introduced by the United Church has not caught on to the extent that it might, and in this 50th anniversary of that great church it is an interesting footnote to the bill to realize that the United and the Anglican churches together prepared a joint hymnal which is used by both congregations even though, unfortunately, and I consider it unfortunate, they seem now to be further from union than ever. Yet the hymn book will, I suppose, survive in both those churches.

It might also be taken as an indication that the people who have been saying the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) is by nature more conservative than many of his colleagues on the government side of the House have uttered some truth. Possibly the inclusion of religious pictures here would indicate that the Minister of Finance is less iconoclastic than some of his colleagues on that side.

There is one other small item that intrigues me, and that is the lifting of the levy on devices designed for measuring the moisture content of agricultural produce. The constituency I represent has a good deal of dairy industry, and this involves putting up hay in great quantities during the season when on occasion summers are quite rainy. I do not really know whether anyone has come up with a sure-fire device to indicate the exact moment when you can put hay in the barn without burning it down, but if someone has, then certainly the decision to lift the levy on such a device is commendable. I suspect that this item really has more to do with the grain trade and some other crops than hay. With some of the newer machines that are putting up ever larger quantities of hay, this question of moisture content becomes very important, and this may well have a beneficial effect on that industry as well.

There is a final area of the bill about which I am curious, and that is the item dealing with casual donations sent by persons abroad to friends in Canada, and the decision by the minister and his department to allow gifts up to \$15 in value to be received without the payment of duty.

When the subject of duty was discussed before, I made particular inquiries about wedding gifts being sent from abroad to Canada. The minister indicated at that time he would be looking into this, but it is a little difficult to see in this measure whether he had that actually in mind in preparing this exemption. This is partly because the government forever acts as if inflation were not around at all. One gets the impression that \$15 could buy something significant, and that is really not true any more.

Quite some years ago during travels abroad one could purchase gifts from a section marked "\$10 or less". Even in 1961-62 these items tended to be rather small. I would suspect now that, in most of the stores in the developed