

ity of studying it. I purpose circulating it in the Maritime Provinces which are the only provinces interested in the matter, and I would like the committee to permit that to be done. It will be another three or four weeks before the next step will be taken.

Mr. MURPHY: While the committee appreciates the position of the minister in charge of the resolution, the point raised by the hon. member for Antigonish and Guysborough is so important that it is questionable whether the committee should advance this resolution any further. If by the Bill to be founded upon it we shall be enacting legislation whereby the consumer will get less for his money than he previously got, surely legislation of that kind ought not to commend itself to hon. members.

Mr. LOGGIE: I was present at the meeting in Halifax. The object of this legislation is to have a uniform weight in the cans. It was found that some of the packers were not putting fourteen ounces in the cans. It was contended by some that a half-pound can would not hold seven ounces. Personally, I took the opposite view, and I do to-day. I think also that a quarter-pound can will hold comfortably three and-a-half ounces. However, the large packers, including Roberts, Simpson & Company, and O'Leary & Lea, who are the principal exporters of canned lobster in Canada, were practically unanimous in contending that what is known as the one-pound can would not contain fourteen ounces of dry meat,—that is, the meat after the fluid has been drained off. Of course, it is essential that the net contents should be on the label for the Canadian and American markets. The law, however, provides that cans can be exported without a label, and it is up to the legislators of the countries to which these cans are exported to protect their consumers. I do not think the consumer is being deceived, because the Canadian and American consumer can plainly see by the label what the can holds, and if the can is reasonably full, there would be no loss to the consumer. To have a can capable of holding more than is put into it is simply a waste of money. Nevertheless, the large packers were practically unanimous in asking for a standard weight of twelve ounces for what is called the pound tin. A one-pound tin does not mean that the tin contains one pound of meat. The two-pound corn can, for instance, contains only from one and-a-quarter to one and-a-half pounds net weight, so there is

no greater deception in the case of these lobster cans than in the case of any other can; so long as the net contents are plainly shown on the label. As to the consumer paying more, I do not think my hon. friend's argument is at all applicable. The price is regulated by the law of supply and demand. The market regulates the price, and I do not think the change in weight will have any effect on it. Certainly, if the packers put three and-a-half ounces into a can, they should receive a higher price than for a can containing only three ounces.

Mr. McMASTER: I understand there are fourteen ounces of lobster meat in a one-pound can. What do the other two ounces consist of? Preservative?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: The other two ounces consist of a liquid which is absolutely necessary to preserve the lobster meat. The lobster packers contend that the cans can not contain the quantity of lobster meat prescribed by the legislation of 1917. Many of these canners have machinery for making cans of particular sizes, and they say that, to comply with the law, they would be compelled to instal new machinery for turning out cans of a different size. That would put them to very considerable expense, and would also place them at a disadvantage—the facts have not been clearly put before me—as compared with packers in Newfoundland. The packers contend that, although the cans they are now using will not hold the quantity prescribed by law, they will hold the amount prescribed by this Bill, plus the liquid required as preservative. I might give the statutory definition of dry lobster meat:

Dry lobster meat means the meat after a can has been opened, turned upside down so as to permit free escape of the liquid and allowed to drain one minute.

Mr. McMASTER: The hon. member for Northumberland (Mr. Loggie) says that there is no danger of fooling the American or Canadian consumer because the label will show the contents of the can, but apparently in the case of cans exported no questions are asked and no lies told. A can will go across the sea to the Irish consumer, for instance, without any indication of the weight of meat inside the can. It would seem to me to be in the interests of the commercial reputation and progress of this country to show plainly on the label the exact amount of edible meat contained in the can. I do not think that would put