

load that has to be carried by a country which buys food products from its own people and cannot sell them.

I am naturally in favour of carrying out the contracts that we have made, and on that account I am in favour of the bill. I think, in fact I am sure, that before another year rolls around the British government will not buy anything more from us, except what the Americans allow it to purchase with the money they provide. Unless somebody else makes loans to Britain, its only source of money for such purchases will be the United States.

We have to carry out our contracts and, therefore, so far as I am concerned, this bill could be passed today.

Hon. T. A. Crerar: Honourable senators, from the remarks of the deputy leader (Hon. Mr. Hugessen) I think it is quite obvious that this bill has to be passed, if for no other reason than to enable us to carry out existing agreements. I am among those who hope that these agreements between governments will soon come to an end. I gather, though, from what the honourable gentleman said that it is contemplated there may be further renewals of the contracts under this Act, or possibly new agreements covering other commodities.

When this legislation was first brought down in parliament its purpose was to facilitate our getting over the transitional period between war and peace; but it now appears to be developing into what may be a permanent feature in relation to our sale abroad of various agricultural products. It seems to me undesirable that this should become a permanent feature of our commerce with Britain or any other country. I agree with the leader of the opposition (Hon. Mr. Haig) that we shall ultimately get the best results by returning to a measure of private trading as between suppliers in this country and purchasers abroad. We are asked to extend this legislation for another year, and I hope that at the end of that period it will be decently interred, and that we shall hear no more of it.

Hon. Mr. Euler: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Reid: Would the honourable gentleman permit a question? In view of the fact that purchases for the British people are made through their government, would it be possible for individuals to make trading agreements as before?

Hon. Mr. Hayden: No, it could not be done.

Hon. Mr. Crerar: If I am in order, I would reply that before the recent election in Great Britain the committee on estimates brought in a recommendation to the government which would indicate that in some respects that

country is moving away from this arrangement of bilateral contracts. That committee recommended the re-opening of the Liverpool and London corn exchanges, and that the former method of trading of wheat be resumed. Similar recommendations were made with regard to tea and cotton. That of course means a return to free trading between producers and consumers.

The motion was agreed to and the bill was read the second time.

THIRD READING

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

Hon. Mr. Hugessen: I would appreciate the views of honourable senators as to whether this bill be referred to a committee or, in view of its simplicity, be read a third time now. The two contracts to which I have referred have, I think, already been considered during this session by the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, and any information which might be obtained by referring the bill to committee is already in the possession of honourable members of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources. Unless someone has views to the contrary, I would move that the bill be now read a third time.

The motion was agreed to, and the bill was read the third time, and passed.

PRIVATE BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. Gray Turgeon moved the second reading of Bill R-2, an Act to amend the Canadian Red Cross Society Act.

He said: Honourable senators, it is not my intention to take up much of your time on the motion for second reading of this bill, because when second reading has been given I shall move that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous and Private Bills. Under the present circumstances, the committee will not be called together until some time after the return of honourable senators following the Easter recess. In the meantime, possibly, I should leave a few thoughts with honourable members, particularly as the bill was before this house last session.

At that time some objection was taken to the passage of the bill on the grounds that the rules of the Senate had not been complied with. The bill had passed through the other place and came before us as the session was nearing its end, and there was not sufficient time to give proper consideration to the operations of the Red Cross Society or to the objectives of the proposed amendments.