

indicating where to do it. What I want to bring to the attention of the minister is that on those well travelled main highways at least there should be signs indicating where there is an office at which a man can report.

Mr. MATTHEWS: If my hon. friend will give me the particulars of this case I shall be very glad to investigate.

Mr. BOTHWELL: I know there are many districts there without a sign at all. In places there are distances of sixty miles between customs houses, with well travelled roads crossing the border and no sign anywhere to indicate where there is a customs house.

Mr. GOTT: The hon. member surely does not believe in signs.

Mr. BOTHWELL: It is not I, but this government, although the signs are plain as to what will happen.

Mr. CASGRAIN: It was written on the wall long, long ago.

Mr. GOTT: You will never live long enough to see it happen.

Mr. CASGRAIN: You will see it, and very quickly.

Mr. MATTHEWS: In spite of my hon. friend's last remark I shall be glad to look into the matter, and get a report from the inspector.

Mr. RALSTON: I want to ask the minister in regard to a complaint I have received from those interested in the butter business in Nova Scotia as to the release of some 8,000 boxes of New Zealand butter on February 22. The complaint was that the dairymen's association and the men in the creamery business down there were not consulted, but word seemed to have gotten out in some way to the packing houses that this butter was to be released, with the result that on the twentieth the packing houses began to sell and consequently cut the price from one to two cents. I have here a copy of the newspaper of February 23 announcing it; I presume the order was made on February 22. The Nova Scotia creameries have lost one to two cents a pound on butter on account of the drop in price, due, they feel, to some leak whereby the release of this New Zealand butter got to the ears of the packers. Was the minister concerned in that himself?

Mr. MATTHEWS: Not primarily concerned, but I happen to know something about it. But in the period the hon. member speaks of, when it was known that this butter was in Halifax, the price did not drop; it advanced from 26½ cents to 30 cents in Montreal.

[Mr. Bothwell.]

Mr. RALSTON: I am speaking about Nova Scotia.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I think there was a general advance in price. If the suggestion is that notice was released to any individual or large importer before others, that is not so; there is nothing in that.

Mr. RALSTON: I assure my hon. friend—I need not say it, he knows it,—that I do not suggest for an instant that the release could have taken place with his knowledge. But I have received a letter to-night from a responsible creamery operator in Nova Scotia, expressing very keen feeling about the situation which developed there. I understand the Nova Scotia Dairymen's Association wired the minister protesting against the release of the butter for at least four or six weeks. Similar wires sent by farmers' organizations. Notwithstanding these protests I understand the butter was released on February 22, and there was a fall in the price of butter that week of two cents a pound. Those are the facts given to me.

Mr. MATTHEWS: If the hon. member will allow me to suggest it, I should like to go into that with him privately. I cannot see how any loss has taken place, for we have information that from the time this butter was landed in Halifax until to-day or yesterday there has been a continual advance in the price of butter both in Toronto and Montreal, and I presume in the maritimes.

Mr. RALSTON: I shall be very glad indeed to go into it with the minister.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I think I can assure the hon. member that the matter was so handled that there was no flooding of the market and no fall in price.

Mr. RALSTON: Let me read one expression from the letter:

As a result of this release and the apparent advance information Nova Scotia creameries have lost two cents per pound on butter sold this week. The buyer is now using New Zealand butter as an argument to buy at still lower prices.

It is quite obvious that the dairy industry was not considered in this matter. No doubt this industry as a whole will protest the action at this time.

They did protest. I have no doubt the minister has had wires from them.

Mr. MATTHEWS: Yes, I have had wires. Just what do they protest against.