

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. gentleman has not quite understood. Questions of taxation must be approved by the minister. Questions involving taxation must be considered by the minister, because it is the executive action of the government; it is something for which the government must assume responsibility. Surely the minister will admit that. Questions of routine we did report should not be dealt with in that day; we recommended that the minister should not be concerned with questions of routine and seizures and so on. That we put as strongly and fairly as we could, and it is because I believe that the whole theory of responsible government is concerned that I put it to the minister myself. That is, the executive substitute, its functions for those of parliament, but when it does so the minister must assume the responsibility.

So much for that. I should have liked to get some assurance from the minister as to what his contemplated action may be, but he has told us that he has not given the matter any consideration and therefore has no contemplated action in mind.

There is one further matter with which I should like to deal, although the Minister of Labour is not in his place. I asked him what steps were being taken in connection with the introduction into this country of a monopoly in films, and he said the matter was under consideration and that we would get some further information on that point. It is possible that some other member of the administration may be able to answer the question and I should like to know whether that investigation is being proceeded with. I hold in my hand a few of the telegrams which I have received from various organizations, women's organizations being particularly concerned about the films and asking whether we are to be at the mercy of an alleged monopoly. If so, then of course we should know it, and I have asked the question for the purpose of eliciting information with which the people of Canada are vitally concerned.

Mr. EULER: In order that the house may be informed of the scope of this furniture regulation, I may say that the order applied only to furniture coming from quite a restricted area in the United States. I am not sure that I mentioned that before, but I think it applies to North Carolina and possibly one or two other states; with regard to importations from Michigan or any other of the United States, or any other country, the regulation does not apply at all. If we find that we were wrong in adding the 40 per cent as I said before, refunds will be made upon application.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I think the whole question rests upon the point whether the goods were sold in the territory named by the minister below the regular market price. That is the whole point.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: So far as the films are concerned I may say to my hon. friend that I understand the Minister of Labour is now exercising such authority as he has under the combines act to investigate the position of matters to see if a combine exists. If it is found that there is reason to believe that a combine exists in contravention of the provisions of the act, then proceedings will be taken under the act.

Mr. BENNETT: I thank the right hon. gentleman for the information he has given. I was pressed to ask before this parliament prorogued whether or not the minister had directed proceedings to be taken. If an investigation is held and it is found that the conditions are not as alleged, that would be the end of it. The right hon. gentleman has said that action will be taken and that is all that can fairly be said.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I was not present in the committee when the question of furniture was first brought up. Do the investigations carried on by the minister show that the articles in question were being slaughtered across the line, or that the price at which they were brought into Canada was less than the fair market value?

Mr. EULER: The report has not been received; if it has come in during the last day or so, I have not seen it.

Mr. CHAPLIN: How did the minister come to take the initial step?

Mr. EULER: Complaints were received from Canadian manufacturers of furniture that goods were being slaughtered in Canada. I do not think there is any doubt that in some southern factories great stocks of furniture have accumulated and under the stress of circumstances they attempted to dispose of the goods, and did dispose of them in Canada. That is how the whole matter came about.

Mr. STIRLING: Were they being sold in Canada at a price lower than that charged in the country of origin?

Mr. EULER: That is the complaint which is being investigated.

Mr. BENNETT: They were being sold at the same price in some cities.