

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Do I understand that what is being sold in the United States as a butter substitute could not be sold in Canada as such but could be sold as a different product in spite of the oleomargarine law?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): It cannot be sold as butter but it could be sold for medicinal purposes. The definition which we have now does not specify this particular kind of fat. I regret I have not the particulars before me but I shall be glad to get them for the hon. member.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Has the minister satisfied himself that this amendment will be fair to the butter producer and not interfere in any way with his market through permitting the introduction of a substitute which can be sold as a medicinal article?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The purpose of the bill is to protect especially the butter producer and the consumer. This bill has been before the agriculture committee when a full discussion took place. The bill met with the approval of the members of that committee but I must admit that since that time the details have not been as fresh in my mind as they might be.

Mr. SANDERSON: Has there been any request for this proposed legislation and, if so, from whom was it received?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The industry submitted samples to us which upon analysis were found not to contain either milk or vegetable fat. The change has been made as a protection to the producer and to the consumer.

Mr. BOUCHARD: Will this legislation permit the manufacture and sale of oleomargarine or similar products? I can remember distinctly my maiden speech many years ago when I spoke against oleomargarine. The majority of the house pronounced themselves to be against this product even when sold under its proper name. There has always been a danger of confusion among the consumers. If this measure is to open the door to substitutes for butter I think our farmers in general will protest very strongly.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The purpose of widening the definition is to afford the protection the hon. member suggests.

Mr. SANDERSON: There was so much noise in the chamber that I could not catch the answer to my question. I believe the minister said that requests had come from the industry. Am I right?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): That is my understanding.

Mr. SANDERSON: What does the minister mean by the industry?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The producers of butter, the creameries.

Mr. BOUCHARD: You mean the dairy industry?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The dairy industry.

Mr. CASGRAIN: The minister will pardon me for not being present when the bill was introduced and I should like to know his reasons for bringing in this legislation. I should like to know who asked for these amendments and from what part of the country requests were received. For instance, has the minister received representations from Quebec?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Requests have been coming in from time to time from the dairy industry as a whole and from the industry in different provinces. As I said before, the purpose of this amendment is to widen the definitions to bring them more in line with modern practices and to assure the consuming public that they are getting what they want to purchase. It is intended also to prevent the manufacture of or the entry into this country of products which will be in competition with those of our dairy producers.

Mr. LUCAS: Has any of this product been sold in Canada up to the present time?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Not of which we have any record, but we understand that it was contemplated that sales would be made.

Mr. LUCAS: This amendment would not keep it out other than by providing that it be sold on its own merits.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): There is a clause in the act which has not been amended. Section 5 reads:

No person shall manufacture, import into Canada, or offer, sell or have in his possession for sale, any oleomargarine, margarine, butterine, or other substitute for butter, manufactured wholly or in part from any fat other than that of milk or cream.

Mr. BOUCHARD: Is that a clause in the new bill?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): No, that has not been changed.

Mr. BOUCHARD: I would suggest that this section be allowed to stand until we have studied the other sections. We could then come back to it if the committee is willing.