

Customs Act

I was impressed by what was said a few moments ago by the hon. member for Nanaimo, and I thought his point was reasonably well taken. In view of the way it had worked in the past, he wanted to know how it would work in the future. In other words, how is the minister going to arrive at a decision? How is he to arrive at a fair market value when action is taken?

The minister has given some slight indication as to how he may endeavour to approach the problem. However, as the hon. member for Broadview has pointed out, in the past it has not been a case of recognizing the fact that goods have come in at prices away below what they could be produced for in Canada. The practice evidently has been, after 300 men were let out of employment in one district, and several hundred more in Quebec and, I believe, three or four hundred more in Cornwall at this Christmas season—

Mr. McCann: That has nothing to do with it at all.

The Chairman: Order. The hon. member has sympathized with me in my attempt to keep the discussion within bounds, and directed to clause 1 of the bill. I think he will also agree with me that he is a little far afield in what he is saying at the present time.

Mr. Rowe: Well, Mr. Chairman, it might appear that way because of my clumsy fashion of expressing myself. But I did think that I was pretty close to the issue before us.

When I made reference to the many people who were out of employment I heard an interjection from the minister which would seem to indicate that he agrees with you, Mr. Chairman, because he said that my remark had nothing to do with the matter at all. I submit, however, that it has. I wonder just how you are going to arrive at a fair market value without taking into account the cost of production. Despite arrangements that have been made with GATT, when the Prime Minister was asked today by the hon. member for Greenwood what policy was being followed by the United States, he said he did not know exactly what policy they were following. Despite his persuasiveness, or his effort to persuade, he has been unable to find out exactly what policy has been followed. Therefore, it seems to me, without any offence to the other members of GATT, we might give some consideration to slight changes in this clause.

Yesterday it was suggested that the word "manufactured" should be removed. The government seemed to agree at one time, but then they changed their minds. There seemed to be some confusion in government policy

[Mr. Rowe.]

yesterday but it appears that it has been straightened out since. The Prime Minister said yesterday that the word "manufactured" could be dropped, and the Minister of National Revenue seemed to agree with him. Some hon. members from western Canada did not agree with that attitude, and I was not surprised. In fact, if I had been in the Prime Minister's place yesterday I do not believe I would have voted either.

Mr. McCann: On a point of order, the amendment was settled yesterday. It is not relevant to the discussion today. The hon. member is out of order in again discussing an amendment which was settled yesterday.

Mr. Rowe: I am glad it is settled, Mr. Chairman, and so are you. So far as the settling of the fair market value is concerned, I am somewhat disturbed, as are the hon. member for Broadview, the hon. member for Greenwood, the hon. member for Nanaimo and others. This is not a matter of party differences. It is a matter in which we are all concerned. It is the employment of our people that is at stake. We are concerned about how this measure is going to work. I know that we are all sincere in this. There is no one worthy of being in this House of Commons who is not sincere when he sees that these things affect so many homes in this country. I say that quite seriously. That concern is felt by hon. members regardless of whose riding is affected. All we are trying to do is to find some ways and means by which this legislation will be made more practical and more effective.

It has been long since appreciated by all parties that dumping of goods is an unfair trade practice. Without going into details, this legislation deals with "the average price, weighted as to quantity, at which the like or similar goods were sold for consumption in the country of export during a reasonable period, not exceeding six months". Therefore, the fair market value and what is a reasonable period are left to the discretion of the minister. The reasonableness of the period is to be left to the discretion of the minister. It might be ten days. I know he would say it would be longer than that; but it will not be longer than six months and will not be less than two or three days.

Yesterday we were told that we were going to add to the civil service personnel. It will take a large number of inspectors to do this job because the United States is a very large country. When you are trying to get a fair market value of a particular product you will find that in some districts they manufacture much more cheaply than in other districts. They sell for less in some districts. The fair