

the fact that this law is very difficult to enforce, that the attempt to enforce it is costing a great deal of money, and that the illegal traffic in intoxicating liquors is very detrimental to the character of our people and works a great deal of injury. According to my view, the only way to meet this great evil—and it is a growing evil—is to reduce customs and excise duties to such a degree that the incentive to break the law will very largely be removed.

We have in Canada at the present time—I have mentioned this before, but I shall repeat it—a small army of men on land and sea who are trying, unavailingly, to enforce the law and protect the customs duties. Opposed to them is an army of lawbreakers, who, unfortunately, have the sympathy of the majority of the people. This is particularly true of the Maritime Provinces and certain other provinces where facilities for breaking the law exist. The result is that the people are demoralized. I have made the suggestion—it is too late to adopt it now—that a committee of this House, with the assistance of the preventive officers of the Crown, should investigate the costs to the country of trying to enforce this legislation, and see how far it is enforced, and get all the facts available in connection with the matter for the use of the Government, in order to decide whether it would be advisable to take some action towards a reduction in the duties. Prior to the enormous increase made in the duties during the War, which increase was justifiable as a war measure, we had no such thing as smuggling or bootlegging to any appreciable extent. But now these things have become industries of our country; many people traffic in them. If we could get back to pre-war duties the revenues would be increased and the character of our people improved. I intend, if Providence permits me to come back here next year, to take up this matter early in the session and commend to the good judgment of this House what I think should be done.

I know very well that many officers of the law, at all events, are trying to do their duty. But it is said that even some magistrates are tampered with. It is alleged, and I think correctly so, that if the smugglers can get one cargo out of three or four past the custom-house they make big money. That is a significant statement. And it is declared that they have money for attempting to bribe magistrates and police officers who are trying to enforce the law. I say again that a large majority of the people are in sympathy with

Hon. Mr. HUGHES.

the lawbreakers and with this illicit traffic that is going on. That state of affairs is deplorable, but none the less it exists.

The motion was agreed to.

#### THIRD READING

The Hon. the SPEAKER: When shall this Bill be read a third time?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: If the House is agreeable, I should like it read a third time to-night, so that the amendment may reach the other House in time for careful consideration. I move, with the leave of the House, that the Bill be read a third time now.

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

#### MEAT AND CANNED FOODS BILL

##### FIRST READING

A message was received from the House of Commons with Bill 6, an Act to amend the Meat and Canned Foods Act.

The Bill was read the first time.

The Hon. the SPEAKER: When shall this Bill be read a second time?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Now, if the House is agreeable.

At present false or dishonest labelling of canned fish cannot be interfered with until the goods are offered for sale in a retail way, and, of course, interference is impossible if the retailing is not done here. This Bill provides a penalty for false or misleading marking if the goods are exported.

The Hon. the SPEAKER: A number of bills have come over from the other House. Are they all to be given a second reading to-night?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I can give an explanation of all these bills if it is the desire of honourable members to proceed with second readings this evening. I do not think there would be any advantage in letting the bills stand for second reading until to-morrow, and in that way losing one day. Of course, none of the bills would be proceeded with in committee to-night.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I would suggest that this Bill and the others be put down for second reading to-morrow, in order that we may have time to read them and may then be ready to express our views.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: That is satisfactory.