

handle this bill and how far it wants to go with it. Probably a representative of the Department of Agriculture could be called in to give an explanation, and then the committee could decide whether it wanted to hold further meetings or not.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: I think that is a good idea.

Hon. Arthur W. Roebuck: Honourable senators, I want to say just a word about this bill and to thank the honourable senator from Inkerman (Hon. Mr. Hugessen), for recalling to my mind by his speech some of the remarks made by me when the original bill was before us. The original bill—which is now the act that we are asked to amend—was not received with unanimous acceptance by the supporters of the Government that proposed it at that time. I remember very well attacking it. I did not like it at all. For instance, section 5 (1) of the act provides:

The Governor in Council may make regulations for prohibiting:

- (a) importation into Canada,
- (b) exportation out of Canada or
- (c) sending or conveyance from one province to another of an agricultural product of any class unless it complies with prescribed standards, has been prepared in accordance with prescribed conditions and is packed and marked in prescribed manner.

In other words the department was taking unto itself the power to make regulations interfering with importation into Canada and exportation out of Canada—foreign trade and interprovincial trade—putting into the hands of officials power to do things that I said at that time should be reserved for Parliament only. I did not like that bill. I thought it was another case of officials of a department, with the bureaucratic ideas that so many of them manifest, reaching for powers which they should not have.

However, the bill was passed, and my guess is that the members of that department have wanted it to be proclaimed but found resistance in cabinet circles to doing so.

Hon. Mr. Reid: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: That is my suggestion. I have no knowledge, but I think that is what it is.

Hon. Mr. Reid: That is a fact.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: They have not got away with it, and now with the new cabinet they are wishing to extend these powers still further and then no doubt get the newcomers to proclaim the bill.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: At the request of the tobacco people.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Well, it may be at the request of the tobacco people, but that is not a good excuse for giving such wide powers to any department of Government.

So, honourable senators, I am all for referring this bill to committee and not acting too hastily on it. Let us take our time about this matter. Do not rush it through. The honourable Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Macdonald) pointed out that the act has stood now for three years, and in my judgment it would not be a bad thing to let it stand for another three years. At all events, let us not push it through too rapidly.

Hon. Austin C. Taylor (Westmorland): Honourable senators, I would like to say a few words in connection with this proposed amendment. We are perhaps losing sight of the fact that the bill would not change the act itself, but provides only for the bringing in of one commodity under the regulations of the act. This is a product which the producers want to come under the provisions of the act when it is proclaimed and when the regulations are passed.

I have had a good deal to do with the administration of regulations under various provincial acts, and I know what has been the practice over the years. In the beginning it was necessary for a provincial Government only to pass an order in council bringing certain sections of a particular federal act into force in that province. Later on, as a result of a test case of one of the marketing or grading acts, it was found necessary for the province to pass an act similar to that passed by the federal Government in relation to the marketing and grading of products which entered into interprovincial and export trade.

As I understand it, a province has jurisdiction to enact legislation, to set up standards and to pass regulations with respect to any agricultural commodity that is sold and consumed within that province, but when that commodity goes into the interprovincial or export trade it then comes within the jurisdiction of the federal Government. Because of that situation, certain acts have been passed by the federal Government with relation to specific products.

In my province of New Brunswick we passed in each case a similar act and similar regulations to those passed by the federal Government. In that way there could be no cause for misunderstanding or misconstruing of different standards in the enactments of the federal Government and those of the province. It was for that reason that identical regulations were passed.

I have really nothing to say about the act itself. It does, however, contain provisions