

Canadian Commercial Corporation

certainly with the United Kingdom, is from private trader to private trader, which in my opinion is the most satisfactory transaction of all.

Mr. Hackett: Is the Canadian Commercial Corporation set up merely to serve during a short period of emergency, so to speak?

Mr. Howe: It was set up that way at first, but since it has become the purchasing agency for the Department of National Defence, since it has taken the place of the Department of Munitions and Supply, if this amendment passes it will be a continuing agency.

Mr. Hackett: Was it not the intention of the minister that it should pass out of existence as soon as conditions became normal?

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I would suggest that hon. members allow an hon. gentleman who is trying to follow a line of questioning to conclude his questions. I believe the hon. member for Muskoka-Ontario was trying to follow a line of questions when the hon. member for Moose Jaw rose.

Mr. Macdonnell (Muskoka-Ontario): He has the ball now; let him carry it.

Mr. Thatcher: I have just one more question to ask. Would the minister not consider during this coming year allowing the corporation to try to get rid of such surplus products as apples, honey and things of that kind, on their own initiative?

Mr. Howe: The entire foreign trade service is engaged in that work. Every man in the employ of the Department of Trade and Commerce is charged with that duty. Surely the hon. gentleman would not suggest that we recall our trade commissioners and send agents of the Canadian Commercial Corporation all round the world, would he?

Mr. Thatcher: Not at all.

Mr. Howe: Let me ask the hon. member what surpluses we have to sell just now. I cannot think of anything.

Mr. Thatcher: Nova Scotia apples, for one thing.

Mr. Howe: We have been over that matter time and again. We have been told in this debate that the Nova Scotia marketing board has sold a large quantity of apples to Belgium.

Mr. Thatcher: And the berries of the hon. member for Fraser Valley.

Mr. Howe: We sold most of those the other day to Ireland. In time we sell everything we have. It is all very well for my hon. friends over there to do what they have been doing ever since 1944; that is, to go around saying

[Mr. Howe.]

the world is coming to an end about six months from now. They are at it again vigorously.

Mr. Thatcher: Oh, no.

Mr. Howe: I remember your leader standing up in this house and saying we must appropriate \$5 billion to relieve unemployment in the first two years after the war. You are doing exactly the same thing today in the matter of foreign trade. The actual fact is that we have sold everything we have produced, as far as I know, with very few exceptions, and we rather expect to be able to continue to do so.

Mr. Gillis: I think the minister's crack about the end of the world is uncalled for at this time. It has nothing to do with this bill. The hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar was absolutely correct in his forecast of unemployment in the post-war period. We have had emergency unemployment relief for the last couple of years on the Pacific coast.

The Deputy Chairman: The hon. member may be quite in order in directing these remarks to the minister, but I hope they are not going to have a private conversation across the aisle.

Mr. Gillis: Mr. Chairman, the minister interjected this matter and I think it is only fair that someone should be allowed to make a few remarks about it. In my opinion, his statement was incorrect. The member for Rosetown-Biggar (Mr. Coldwell) is not in his seat and had nothing to do with antagonizing the minister. Very definitely there is something badly needed in the maritimes in connection with employment. Difficulties are being experienced in the marketing of maritime coal. Tearing up an industry because you cannot market its product is not a solution and is not good economics. That is all I want to say. I suggest that the minister and all concerned keep to the bill so that we shall not become involved in these petty wranglings.

Mr. Drew: It is important to clearly understand the connection between the Department of National Defence and the operation of this corporation. It has been stated that there is an organization within the Department of National Defence known as the defence commitments authority. So that we shall understand this matter, is it quite definite that it is upon the recommendation of the defence commitments authority that this corporation makes purchases on behalf of the Department of National Defence?

Mr. Howe: It is on instructions from the deputy minister of national defence. This form has been used since about 1940, I