

As to the kind and degree of regulation made possible under this act we find by section 4 (1) that the powers of the board are exceedingly broad:

The board shall, subject to the provisions of this act, have power

(a) to regulate the time and place of marketing the regulated product, and to determine the manner of distribution and the quantity and quality or grade of the regulated product that shall be marketed by any person at any time, and to prohibit the marketing of any of the regulated product of any grade or quality.

That is to my mind a tremendous power to place in the hands of the board, a power that I certainly should not be willing to place there. Section 4 continues:

(b) to exempt from any determination or order any person or class of persons engaged in the production or marketing of the regulated product or any class, variety or grade of such product.

Then follow three or four paragraphs to which I have no objection. But here is one to which I think decided objection should be offered:

(f) to require any or all persons engaged in the production or marketing of the regulated product to register their names, addresses and occupations with the board, or to obtain a licence from the board, and such licence shall be subject to cancellation by the board for violation of any provision of this act or regulation made thereunder;

If it is the intention that a poll should be held in accordance with the provisions of the Marketing Act in Great Britain, it will be necessary of course for the producers to be registered, but if there are to be no steps other than those already proposed in this bill for the formation of the scheme, I think this provision is highly unnecessary. It should not be necessary for the small farmer who produces a few pounds of butter weekly or raises one or two head of cattle occasionally to have to procure a licence from the board to produce these products. I do not think there is anything suggested with regard to the other powers of the board to which I would raise objection.

A few words now with regard to the regulating authority. We have first the marketing board. If the act should pass and the dominion marketing board be set up I do not see that there could be any objection raised to the constitution of the board as provided by this bill, or as to the manner of the creation of that board. But with regard to the local boards I think we may justly raise objection.

Section 5 provides for the erection of a local board. A petition may be presented by a representative number of persons which shall

[Mr. Butcher.]

state first of all the natural product to be the subject of the scheme of regulation; it shall present the proposed scheme in sufficient detail, including arrangements for organization and administration under the supervision of the board, to enable the governor in council to consider its expediency; it must set out "the powers hereinbefore mentioned"—that is the powers conferred upon the board in section 4, "which it is proposed shall be exercised by the local board under the board"; also full information respecting the quantity of the product produced and the markets therefor; the number of persons who shall comprise the local board and the basis of their selection, and so on.

I can imagine that local boards being set up all over the country will be an intolerable nuisance to the farmers whose products they handle. That is my profound conviction. It seems to me that by this bill we are creating a large number of officials who, as I have said, will be a nuisance to the producers.

I want for a few moments to compare the provisions of this bill with those of the Agricultural Marketing Act of Great Britain. I firmly believe that majorities should rule, and if our act were framed somewhat on the basis of the British act, and if the scheme could be brought into force in Canada only by the same means as a similar one can be in Great Britain, I think I should have to support the bill.

I find that in Great Britain this is what happens. First of all there must be submitted to the minister the scheme that is the mind of the producer or producers. Any number may submit the scheme, but they must satisfy the minister that they substantially represent the producers of the product sought to be regulated, both as to number of persons and quantity of product. Any petitioner or body of petitioners may present a scheme to the minister. That step is precisely the same as must be taken in Canada.

But now we find a difference in the operations of the British Marketing Act as compared with ours. The minister must cause to be published in the Gazette and elsewhere at his discretion a notice of the submission of the scheme, and of the place where copies thereof may be obtained. The minister in that notice invites objections and suggested modifications. When the modifications suggested and the objections offered have been made known to him it is the minister's duty to consider them, and unless he considers them frivolous he shall direct a public inquiry to be held and shall consider the report of the person holding the inquiry. I might state