

but unless they are it seems to me that the minister would have power under this section to deal with them as he saw fit.

Mr. GARDINER: I do not think there would be any chance of any minister dealing with them otherwise than in the manner in which they are dealt with in the ordinary trade. That is, there are established weights for all of these ordinary commodities with which we are dealing, and I do not think any minister would attempt to change that.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shall the section carry?

Mr. BENNETT: No. I must say that I think there is a great principle involved here, a principle with regard to which the present Prime Minister railed for hours. No wonder the hon. member for Melfort (Mr. McLean) nods his head. Apparently he did not intend to do so, but he remembers the incident to which I refer. It is wholly unsound. Think what it means. It means that we have clothed one man with authority to do what? We have given him authority to establish a legal weight per bushel for such commodities not already included under section 18 of this act as may be deemed necessary. This is not even to be subject to the provisions of any other statute. It gives the minister the power to repeal statutes which have to do with the weights of other commodities.

I am satisfied that this is bureaucracy gone mad. That is what it means. I can remember the present Prime Minister taking hours of the time of the house railing against this sort of thing. This involves a very important principle, namely parliament clothing one individual with the power to fix and establish a legal weight per bushel for any commodity not already dealt with under the act, regardless of all the other statutes in the country. Wheat is named here. Potatoes are not. It is not to be even a matter of order in council; it is the minister himself who may do this. That may be Liberalism, but it is not the brand of Liberalism which was preached from this side of the house during the years from 1930 to 1935. However, other days, other manners.

I cannot think that the minister desires to assume such dictatorial and autocratic powers as are here concerned. If it were not for the principle which is involved I would not waste the time of the committee in speaking about the matter. The principle is: Shall parliament confer upon one man the right, regardless of what other statutes say, to fix the weight of a commodity at any figure he sees fit, and include it as part of section 18,

when parliament is now dealing with several commodities, to bring them within section 18 and enlarge the list? In future the list may be enlarged by somebody else. It is just that sort of legislation, as I say, against which the present Prime Minister used to argue not for minutes but for hours, reading from many learned authorities. I can see before me many who on various occasions read from Lord Hewart's book to indicate what a terrible thing it was that the will of the people should be used thus for the purpose of clothing one man with the authority of parliament itself. I dare say there are some who will remember the harsh terms that were used, and the effort made to indicate one man as the person who deserved them. I certainly remember it, being the person alluded to, but apparently that is not a matter of importance now. I do think the minister should not place himself in that position, but of course we realize that he has the power to pass this bill.

Mr. DUPUIS: Mr. Chairman, I remember quite well the incident to which the right hon. leader of the opposition referred, in regard to the present Prime Minister. I personally protested against the custom of giving a minister of the crown arbitrary power. The then Prime Minister, or his ministers, between 1930 and 1935 stated that that was the usual way to do it, and that otherwise the minister could not administer his department.

Mr. BENNETT: Those were regulations made by the governor-in-council.

Mr. DUPUIS: And even in bills. If I had the time I could put my finger on scores of bills—

Mr. BENNETT: You would have great difficulty.

Mr. DUPUIS: —where apparently arbitrary power has been given.

Mr. BENNETT: Be good enough to name one.

Mr. DUPUIS: Of course the right hon. gentleman knows it very well.

Mr. BENNETT: That is unparliamentary, but we will pass it by. Name one.

Mr. DUPUIS: If the right hon. the leader of the opposition would give me a chance I could name scores of bills where the same thing was done by the former government.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shall the section carry?

Mr. BENNETT: No, but I am not going to waste more time on it.