

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Mr. Chairman, if those words are inserted we shall have the bill back in the same position as the original act of many years ago.

Mr. MARTELL: That is where it should be.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: The late government found after a number of years' experience that the activities of private companies had been pretty well taken care of by the subsidies granted and that if continued far more money was likely to be required than the House was disposed to vote. Consequently the act was changed. True, this was during the war, but I think the change would have been made anyway. The legislation applies to municipalities and now we have widened it to cover co-operative activities, and these have been provided for in the estimates accordingly. To still further widen the operation of the act will only result in dissipating that vote all over the country so that it will fail to achieve the purpose we have in view. For instance, the cold storage plant at Prince Rupert would require nearly as much assistance as the entire amount voted. This measure is for the purpose, as I have said, of developing co-operative cold storage plants for dairy products, fruit and fish—in a word, for anything that requires cold storage. I would be delighted to accept the hon. gentleman's amendment but the circumstances I have described forbid it.

Mr. WALLACE: The hon. minister refers to co-operative activities. In my own district we have the Norfolk Co-operative Company, which is organized under the Companies Act but is absolutely and strictly a co-operative organization. Would this bill apply to such a company?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Yes. I have intimated several times that where the organization was under the Companies Act but was co-operative in its nature and particularly if it distributed its profits on the basis of the business supplied, it would certainly be recognized as coming under this legislation. But that would have to be left to the discretion of the department in the administration of the act.

Mr. MARTELL: Mr. Chairman I do not want to press my amendment unduly, but if we have to rely on co-operative and municipal cold storage plants in Nova Scotia we are not going to get any. We are a small province. Occasionally we can get private individuals to build cold storage plants, and these plants must of course rely upon the agricultural and

other industries to get business; but we cannot secure co-operative effort in the same way as it operates in the West or in the big province of Ontario. Therefore I think it is a mistake for the minister to take away financial encouragement from those who want to engage in this form of private enterprise. The old act contained the necessary provision to this end, and I believe it should be maintained in the present act. As I see it, the minister is actuated by a desire to get away from the big cold storage plants receiving bonuses. The Agricultural department should certainly assist every small industry that has for its object the advancement of agricultural interests. We in the province of Nova Scotia cannot get co-operative or municipal cold storage plants, and although I have every admiration for the minister, I submit it is a mistake for him to exclude from the operation of the act say, four or five individuals who may associate together for the purpose of securing a charter under the Nova Scotia Joint Stock Companies Act in order to carry on a cold storage plant. The whole tendency appears to be to discourage individual effort directed towards the promotion of agricultural industry in the small provinces. The trouble to-day is that we have democracy running riot. I am just as much a low tariff man as the Minister of Agriculture, and I am just as much interested in some phases of public ownership as he is, but when we get so far away from practical business as to endeavour to encourage co-operative and municipal effort as against the initiative of private individuals, I say we are usurping functions that governments were never intended to assume. I believe that the old act of the Honourable Sydney Fisher was the best possible legislation to encourage the erection of cold storage plants. True, time may have shown that some changes were necessary, but to discourage private initiative is to create chaos and kill industry, and, representing an agricultural constituency, I protest against such a course. I believe an individual should have the right to engage in any sort of industry, and I do not think that it is in the interests of the masses generally that municipal and co-operative bodies should be encouraged at the expense of private enterprise.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: When the bill was first introduced it did not include municipalities, but at the instance of the hon. member for Victoria and Carleton (Mr. Caldwell) in the Agricultural committee the bill was amended to meet his views and the farming members particularly of the committee were