

Customs Act

If the Prime Minister feels that the date is an unwise choice, and that is his main objection, he can of course suggest a date six months later because, as he knows, by virtue of a provision in the British North America Act, if parliament is not in session next December it would certainly have to be in session within six months after that. Therefore I urge that the amendment be given favourable consideration.

Amendment (Mr. Cameron, Nanaimo) negatived: Yeas, 14; nays, 126.

The Chairman: I declare the amendment lost.

Section agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported.

Mr. Speaker: When shall this bill be read the third time? Now?

Mr. Fleming: There is one matter I should like to mention.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am asking if the bill is to be read a third time now. If consent is not given then this bill will be ordered to be read at the "next sitting of the house".

Mr. Knowles: On a point of order, I am usually the one who seeks to delay third readings until the next day, but second reading was not given today—

Mr. Speaker: If second reading was given on a different day—

Mr. Knowles:—so I suggest it is in order to proceed with third reading today.

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry; I thought second reading had been given today. It is my mistake. Therefore the bill is before the house for third reading now.

Mr. McCann moved the third reading of the bill.

Mr. Donald M. Fleming (Eglinton): I have a matter to raise on third reading. Yesterday afternoon in committee of the whole I introduced an amendment which had two parts to it. The amendment can be found at page 916 of *Hansard* and reads as follows:

That clause 1 of Bill 29 be amended by striking out of the proposed new section 35 (6) of the Customs Act, the following words: the word "manufactured", in line 8, and the words "as the result of the advance of the season or the marketing period", in lines 9 and 10.

When I introduced that amendment the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) rose to his feet and said:

Would the hon. member permit an interruption? Would he not prefer to move the amendment in [Mr. Knowles.]

two parts? I believe the government would be quite prepared to accept the first part, but might have some reservations about the second.

He then proceeded a little further. You will note, Mr. Speaker, that the words that the Prime Minister used were, "I believe the government would be quite prepared to accept the first part." In view of that assurance given by the Prime Minister I said at once, with a view to expediting the business of the house:

I readily accept the Prime Minister's suggestion. In view of what he has said I am quite prepared to move it in two parts. In view of what the Prime Minister has said about the first part I shall not labour what will now become the first amendment.

I was not a little surprised therefore, Mr. Speaker, to find on page 916 of *Hansard* of December 15 that the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) is recorded as having said:

Would the hon. member permit an interruption? Would he not prefer to move the amendment in two parts? I believe the government might be quite prepared to accept the first part, but might have some reservations about the second.

The fact, Mr. Speaker, is that the word "would" was used by the Prime Minister, and now the word "might" appears in *Hansard*. The Prime Minister said he believed the government would be quite prepared to accept the first part. The Prime Minister used the word "would", and said he believed "the government would be quite prepared to accept the first part." That is attested to not only by recollection, but by the fact that the record taken in this house shows the Prime Minister used the word "would" and that the record was changed by someone by eliminating the word "would" and substituting the word "might".

Now, Mr. Speaker, in view of the importance of this question, not only because of the fact that the course of action which I followed immediately after this statement was prompted by the Prime Minister's assertion that he believed the government would be prepared to accept the first part of my amendment, but also because of the fact that the statement of the government given at that moment became a matter of very clear importance as the debate proceeded, it seems to me that whoever revised the original text of the Prime Minister's speech in the house, whoever made this change, has made a very improper change. It has completely altered the sense of the Prime Minister's actual statement in this house upon which we relied in following the course that was followed during the balance of the debate.

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): I must confess that I made the change. I did not realize I made any change in the meaning of the sentence. Possibly I