

to interfere with a tariff arrangement with another country. But if the dairy farmers have a right to be protected, the potato growers have the same right, and if this bill should pass we would have the situation of Canadian-grown potatoes being refused entry into British Columbia while Washington potatoes were allowed to come in. Surely that is discrimination, and is not in the interests of Canada as a whole.

We hear a great deal these days about private enterprise; but let me pass on a newspaper despatch which recently came to me from my province, telling about a certain farmer who was fined for selling not poor milk, but milk that was too good. The fact is that in that province one cannot even give his friend a sack of potatoes or other vegetables without special permission. The regulations which prevent the marketing of vegetables except through a marketing board helped the farmers for a time, but today they are in dire straits. Farmers are often carried away at meetings by smooth talkers. I recall that some three years ago a farmers' organization on the Pacific coast wrote and told me that if I did not vote for the abolition of the open market for oats and other grains all the members of the organization would vote solidly against me. I pointed out to them: "You boys are just being told a little story, which sounds good, about the open market".

What has taken place? Today wheat is handled under a federal board, and in our province the poultryman, the dairyman and the stockman are paying more for grain than they ever paid before. It is useless to make complaint, because these prairie boards, of course, are out to get every last cent for the farmer. I mention this to illustrate the point I am endeavouring to make, that often there is a tendency to ask for something which looks good at the time without considering what it may lead to. Hence I have no compunction at all in rising this afternoon to protest strongly against these concessions, which I prophesy—and I do not lightly make predictions—will lead to demands from every section of agricultural producers,—the poultrymen of British Columbia, who do not want eggs brought in from any other province; the potato-growers, who object to the importation of potatoes from Alberta; the vegetable-growers, who dislike competition from any other province; and an association in which I am interested, which may well say, "We do not want butter from Ontario and Quebec".

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: What about the manufacturers? May it not extend to manufactured products?

Hon. Mr. Reid: I am not quite sure.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: It is the next step.

Hon. Mr. Reid: By this bill great power is given to the minister. It is a vicious principle, and I foresee a difficult time for the government when it is clothed with powers to set up trade barriers, and must either consent to or turn down requests from egg men, poultry men, apple men, and every other group or organization that objects to competition from some other province. I will do all I can to help the people of British Columbia and of all Canada to fight unfair competition from abroad. I am particularly interested in the farmers. God knows the industrialists have received plenty of protection. But if barriers are to be erected between the provinces at the behest of pressure groups which demand from the minister protection against the producers from some other province, I believe the result will be considerable friction, especially with the great consuming public.

Apart from section 5, I am concerned about the power to be conferred on inspectors. An inspector may walk into a plant and impound not only the product but the machinery by which it is made.

I think these powers are too sweeping. So I make no apology for speaking on this bill, although I realize that probably the stage is all set for it to be put through. My objection to this legislation is strengthened by the feeling that at some future time it may react against the interests of the farmers. I am not quite sure, but the possibility is there.

Another pertinent objection, I believe, is that the bill covers before us at a time when the Minister of Agriculture has vacated the scene; and I am wondering who can tell us what is the real purpose of this legislation. I do not believe that any official can supply the right answers.

Hon. J. H. King: Honourable senators, I shall not take more than a few moments. I do not suppose anyone will question my loyalty to and admiration for the present government, but I am distressed and disappointed that that government has presented this bill,—

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. King:—which bears the innocent title, "An Act to establish national standards for dairy products and to regulate inter-provincial and international trade in dairy products." A beautiful title, covering everything we have been doing, for years, in the interests of the public of Canada. But as you go through the bill you run into a joker, covered up. I am astonished that members