

*Marketing Act*

"regulated product." And all the provisions apply to regulated products.

We all realize that this bill is an experimental proposal. It has not yet been tried out in Canada, and you can spoil a measure by extending it too far. Let us try it out in the first instance in connection with those regulated articles which were in contemplation when the bill was drawn; then, if it does not serve its purpose, there is ample time hereafter to extend it or to limit it, and if anyone wants an inquiry into spread, or greater legislation than we now have in regard to these matters, there are other acts that can be amended. But so far we have proceeded on the single principle of dealing with regulated products, and it would be unwise now, without a great deal of consideration, to widen the scope of the measure at the present time.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: It would seem to me that some such investigation as this might very well be a preliminary step in the setting up of various schemes. Natural product is already defined in the second section, and it is defined to include:

Animals, meats, eggs, wool, dairy products, grains, seeds, fruit and fruit products, vegetables and vegetable products, maple products, honey, tobacco, lumber, and such other natural products of the forest, sea, lake or river, and any article of food or drink wholly or partly manufactured or derived from any such product that may be designated by the governor in council, in accordance with the provisions of this act.

This provision is wide enough to cover a great many of the products in which to-day, we believe, there are very unnecessary spreads and in the handling of which there is a great deal of waste, in addition to many of the evils that have been revealed in connection with the present investigation. It seems to me that a great many farmers and other producers might hesitate before entering upon any scheme until they were convinced that it was in their interests to do so, until it had been very clearly shown to them just where the evil lies in the present way of handling things. Under these circumstances an investigation would be highly desirable. Further than that, supposing a board handles one particular kind of product. There are other products that may occasionally be substituted for one that is regulated. It would not be possible to carry out adequately the regulation of one product unless possible substitutes for it were also regulated. As a step towards that regulation an investigation such as is made possible under the bill as it now stands seems to me highly desirable. Instead of ex-

(Mr. Guthrie.)

tending the scope of the bill the minister is now asking us to restrict it. I hope he will see his way to hold it as it was originally drafted.

Mr. BROWN: It will be a matter of keen disappointment to many that the government has put this limitation upon the scope of this bill. For myself I was prepared to accept this part II as in some measure a redeeming feature of the bill, although I think that this matter should be dealt with in a separate measure. I thought this bill was perhaps in some degree a response to the demands made more than once by way of resolution in this house, both last session and this, for investigation into price spreads not only in natural products but in all products. With the arguments advanced by the two hon. members from Winnipeg I am sure that those who represent farming communities are in hearty accord. The limitation of the scope of this bill in my judgment makes it likely to be of very little value. What we want is investigation not only in the spreads in prices of farm products, processed products, but also into the spreads in prices of all products. It seems to me more reasonable to put these matters all under one bill than to make a special bill for investigation into the spreads of these regulated products.

Mr. TURNBULL: Did not my hon. friend vote against having any investigation into anything?

Mr. BROWN: I did not.

Mr. TURNBULL: On the second reading?

Mr. BROWN: Hon. members on the other side are very anxious to twist things so as to seem to put us in the wrong.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. BROWN: Personally I object to a bill that is full of poison even if there happens to be a little good meat in it. While I objected very strongly to the first part of this bill, it does not necessarily follow that I am opposed to investigation into spreads. I think any one who is gifted with an ordinary sense of logic would recognize that. But we constantly get arguments from the other side which, as I had occasion to say a few days ago, are scarcely worthy of a debate in a country schoolhouse.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: A reference to some remarks made in an earlier part of the debate will throw light on the reasons for the proposed change. On May 14, when the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr.