

*Customs Act*

time, but if the house wishes to proceed at length with discussion of this bill I would ask it to say so. Is it the pleasure of the house to extend the time allotted for this discussion?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Jean-Pierre Côté (Minister of National Revenue):** Mr. Speaker, I think agreement has been given because the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) has asked that consideration of Bill No. S-10 be completed, even though we might have to take part of the private members' hour. This debate was supposed to take only a very short time.

[*English*]

**Mr. Stewart (Cochrane):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, there was an agreement to go over the time limit to dispose of this bill. It seems to me that if the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters) wishes to cooperate he would not take so much time out of the private members' hour, in order that there might still be an opportunity to debate the items raised by private members.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard):** My understanding was that this matter would take only a short time. I do not think there is unanimous consent that we should proceed to discuss this bill until five o'clock. If hon. members agree that we should set aside private members' hour until this bill has been disposed of I would, of course, be willing to accept its decision.

**Mr. Drury:** I think there would be unanimous consent to our continuing for another five minutes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard):** Is it agreed that the time given to this bill will be extended by five minutes?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Peters:** There are many things I should have liked to have said about this bill during the next 15 or 20 minutes, but I shall certainly abide by your ruling, Mr. Speaker, It always seems odd to me that the high duty charged on certain goods coming from the United States should result in these anomalies. Cigarettes are a good example. You pay duty of about a dollar per carton. If the officer demands the payment of duty it costs as much to pay the duty as it did to buy the cigarettes. These cigarettes could obviously not then be sold at a profit. Yet, the law says they have to be destroyed if customs duty and costs cannot be recovered. I am glad the

minister has decided these articles are to be sold by auction where it will not make much difference whether or not the total amount is realized.

There are a number of other clauses here which I think are important. I am sorry the hon. member for Cochrane (Mr. Stewart) is not familiar with the difficulties which develop in this field. Obviously, there is no port of entry near him. In places such as Cobalt, where there are ports of entry, disputes often arise between customers and customs officials when goods purchased in the United States are found to be below expectation either in quality or in quantity. This often results in disagreement about whether the full duty should have been collected on such goods. I know the minister is giving consideration to extending the time during which these discussions can take place from 30 to 90 days. I am glad this is so, because sometimes the process involves writing to the shippers of the commodity concerned to ascertain whether the labelling was correct or whether the bill of lading only covered a partial shipment.

Then again, differences often arise because a person purchasing goods covered by what he believes to be a specific rate of duty finds that the goods can be used in another category where the rate of duty payable is different. In some cases no duty is payable at all. I am pleased the minister should have agreed that in such cases, though duty must be paid initially, it can be refunded.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to abuse the time allowed me by unanimous consent of the house. I am prepared to see this bill go to committee for consideration.

**Mr. Harding:** Mr. Speaker, I am anxious to say a few words on this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard):** Does the house agree that we should proceed with this bill at length? I would remind hon. members once again that it is past four o'clock. The chair could not care less whether or not it is decided to stay on this bill until five o'clock, but I would like to have a determination made whether we should proceed with this bill until its completion or whether a time limit should be placed upon the discussion. I say this because private members' hour has not been called; it should have been called, and the proper motion has not been made.

**Mr. Peters:** May I suggest that my hon. friend from Kootenay West (Mr. Harding) be given unanimous consent to make limited