

it—that there should be a statutory limitation of the time within which these drawbacks may be claimed. I dare say the minister knows that on more than one occasion difficulty was experienced in checking claims for drawbacks. It is disconcerting to the accountants. The validity of the claims was not in question but checking them became extremely difficult. By placing in the statute a limitation on the time within which application could be made we should be doing a service not only to the country but also to those who are claiming drawbacks.

Mr. DUNNING: It would certainly be a service to the treasury.

Mr. BENNETT: During my time I saw one claim that came in not months but years after, and when pressed as to why it was not made sooner the reply was, "Oh well, we are very busy," and that sort of thing. Nobody knows better than the minister that such claims are extremely difficult to check. I should like to see the time limited to six months, though perhaps six months is too short.

Mr. DUNNING: In some lines it is too short.

Mr. ILSLEY: The suggestion is that it be put in the statute?

Mr. BENNETT: At the top of page 4. Say "the period within which such drawback may be allowed shall be limited to one year," if the minister thinks six months is too short.

Mr. ILSLEY: There is a good deal of merit in the suggestion. It is the intention, however, to review the whole Customs Act during the next twelve months and see whether we cannot revise and consolidate it; we are making plans for that now.

Mr. BENNETT: Perhaps Mr. Tanton will be cared for by that time.

Mr. ILSLEY: The suggestion can be considered in the revision of the act. I think that would be preferable to carrying the limitation right now.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: If there is no doubt that a year is plenty of time, why not insert it in the act now?

Mr. ILSLEY: It is a matter that should be considered. Conditions in different industries vary a great deal, and it is impossible to turn over in one's mind in a minute or two the great variety of industries that claim drawbacks and the conditions under which they operate. At the moment I cannot think of any reason why a year should not be long enough, but I have an impression that in some industries it might not be.

Mr. DUNNING: In the case of home consumption drawbacks, stocks are held from time to time until they qualify.

Mr. LOCKHART: I should like to add a further word about the telegrams of protest as read. The minister has to a large extent admitted that there is a possibility that many of these claims may be justified. If he makes it retroactive to the extent of permitting only the two cases, those in which claims have already been filed or are before the courts, it will be a hardship to force that upon dealers in all cases; because while they may not have filed official protests with the department I know there have been opinions expressed throughout the country that this is discrimination to a certain extent. I think the minister should not go too far. The courts could deal fairly with such cases. The suggestion of the minister to impose a limitation might be adopted, and the matter could be cleared up in the future. If, however, the interpretation given by the commissioner, the minister or others has been wrong, an adjustment should be due those who have paid the duty.

The minister's contention may also be justified that the drawback may not in all cases be passed on to the consumer, but I gather from conversation with many men engaged in business that they have entered protests against paying the duties imposed and feel that they should be given equal consideration along with those cases which are at present in the courts.

Section agreed to.

On section 9—Drawback on exported goods manufactured of imported materials and of materials of domestic manufacture of the same class.

Mr. BENNETT: Will the minister make it clear what he has in mind? The old statute dealt with pig iron; this does not. Some would say it dealt with half of that term and not the other half.

Mr. ILSLEY: It is not necessary to refer to pig iron specifically; it is included I think in the general language of the new section. The explanation of the section is found in the explanatory notes:

The effect is to extend to other goods the provisions contained in the present subsection as to pig iron.

This practice has been followed heretofore under authority of regulations made by the governor in council.