

*Customs Act*

**Mr. Coldwell:** Yes.

**Mr. St. Laurent:** Whether it commences at the end of 1954 or at the beginning of 1955.

**Mr. Low:** May I just say a word relative to the amendment. I listened to the arguments on both sides, and I am persuaded that there will be an opportunity to review the operation of this legislation when we come to the estimates of the Department of National Revenue, at any time. For that reason I do not think that the amendment would be of any value at all. Under the circumstances I feel that I must vote against it. But because I feel the government must have something with which to deal with this end of season dumping, I believe the bill should pass.

I want to say to the minister, by way of a word of warning, that in using his discretion he must be extremely careful not to place upon any of these goods a value that would represent an unjustified increase in price to the Canadian consumer. We must remember this. As has already been pointed out, the people in western Canada especially are obliged to depend almost entirely upon export markets for their income. As a consequence they are anxious about the prices they have to pay for imported goods. They want to know that they are not being unfairly dealt with in the matter of any valuation that is placed upon these goods coming into the country, no matter whether they are end of season goods or not.

**Mr. Knowles:** The hon. member for Peace River and the Prime Minister have both suggested that on the estimates there is ample opportunity to review the operations under a statute like this, and to review the policy involved in it.

May I remind both these hon. gentlemen that, although we can review the operations carried on under legislation when the estimates are before us, that does not give us an opportunity to press effectively for repeal of legislation on the statute books. Hon. members know that it is difficult to get laws on the statute books, but once they get there they can tend to stay for a long time. I would remind the Prime Minister and others who are interested in this matter of the very real concern expressed on this point by the hon. member for Rosthern, the hon. member for Vegreville and the hon. member for Charlotte. They expressed the view that there should be real assurance that this is not going to be permanent legislation, and that the possibility of it being discontinued after a set period of time should be very real.

The Prime Minister doubts whether the legislation should have a cut-off date in it,

but may I remind him that when other pieces of legislation have been brought in that have been described as emergency in character they have contained cut-off dates. I refer to the transitional powers act, the Emergency Powers Act and others on the statute books now, as well as to other pieces of legislation. Other items of policy have been put into effect on a year to year basis. It seems to me that because of the admitted and alleged emergency character of this legislation we should not put it on the statute books in such a way that for all practical purposes it will be there for a long time to come.

Perhaps I might be permitted to illustrate my point by referring to a delightful and very interesting little anecdote that is recorded in Grace MacInnis' book on the life of her father, J. S. Woodsworth, which I think hon. members of various parties in the house have been interested in reading since it came off the press recently.

**Mr. Johnston (Bow River):** What is the price of it?

**Mr. Knowles:** It would make an excellent Christmas gift. Mrs. MacInnis tells how her father was concerned, as friends of his will recall, about some of the things that were being done by the mounted police. Though he had a personal friendship for these gentlemen, he had certain views of his own about police activities. It appears that one day he asked a question in the house of Mr. Lapointe, who was then minister of justice, about a certain mounted policeman who was patrolling outside of the parliamentary library. It seems that the minister of justice told Mr. Woodsworth that he would answer the question later. But as I recall the story, Mr. Lapointe met Mr. Woodsworth outside of the house a few days later and asked him not to press the question in the house.

The reason Mr. Lapointe asked Mr. Woodsworth not to press the question in the house was that Mr. Lapointe had found out—and this was in 1926—that following the fire in 1916 which destroyed the parliament buildings a policeman was posted outside the library to protect it from looters. Mr. Lapointe had found out that no one had ever cancelled the order, and so ten years later a policeman was still patrolling outside the library.

I suggest that laws on the statute books are something like that. They have a permanence that is very real, and bearing in mind the arguments and the words of caution that have been expressed by the hon. member for Charlotte, the hon. member for Vegreville and the hon. member for Rosthern, I suggest that this amendment should be given consideration.