

plained by honourable gentlemen on both sides that I am not going to refer much to the general features of it. I think the honourable member from Wentworth (Hon. Mr. Smith) showed very clearly that, so far as the packers are concerned, this Bill is not properly constructed; and with such evidence as has been given here to-day I think the leader of the Government would be well advised to withdraw the Bill and let it stand until another session, rather than test the House upon it.

May I refer to one or two points? I know the wood business well. I have had much to do with it in my time. Since my childhood a standard cord of wood in Ontario has contained 128 cubic feet.

Hon. Mr. WATSON: It is the same all over Canada.

Hon. Mr. EDWARDS: The honourable gentleman who has just spoken could not have read the Bill, because there is a provision that wood can be sold by the load in any way you please. Therefore, so far as this part of the Bill is concerned, it has no effect at all, except that it does legalize the selling of wood otherwise than by the cord. I say again the consumers in this country are those who should be first considered; but, while that is true, fair consideration should be given to every interest. What is the history of this Bill? Honourable gentlemen will see by the number of the Bill that it was introduced into the House of Commons early, but has been held there for a considerable time. I think it is a mistake in the last stage of the session to renew the effort to pass this Bill. I think the evidence that has been given here with respect to it ought to be sufficient to convince the Government that this measure is ill-advised and that the matter should be given further consideration before the Bill is presented to Parliament.

May I say just one word with regard to cement? I hope honourable gentlemen will not criticise because I refer to that subject.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE: You know something about that too.

Hon. Mr. EDWARDS: But this question is exactly parallel with what my honourable friend from Wentworth (Hon. Mr. E. D. Smith) has said regarding other matters, particularly as to the effect upon the trade in which he himself is concerned. I desire to point out the inadvisability of passing this Bill as affecting the cement interests. There is not merely one cement company in Canada; there are fifteen or sixteen.

Hon. Mr. EDWARDS.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE: There is only one big company.

Hon. Mr. EDWARDS: There is one which is much larger than the others, but I suppose the interest of the others in this Bill is proportionate to the interest of the Canada Cement Company in it. That company to-day holds \$1,800,000 worth of bags, which were made to contain the weight that is now sold, 87½ lb. If this Bill went into effect to-day, those bags would all have to be scrapped; they would not be worth one dollar. The other companies are interested in a similar way.

But the Bill in its final clause says that it shall not go into force until one year after it has received the Royal assent. Some honourable gentlemen may think that cures the evil, but not at all. Many of those bags will be in use for the next ten years. It is the buyer, and not the seller, who would get the advantage; the buyer is charged for the bag when he receives it, but is credited for the bag when he returns it. So, even if this Act should not come into effect for a year, a very great injustice would be done and there would be an enormous loss to the country.

Under these circumstances I appeal to my honourable friend (Hon. Sir James Lougheed)—and, if the discussion continues, he will hear further evidence in the same direction—that it is inadvisable to pass this Bill to-day, and that it should stand over at least until it has been further considered.

Hon. Mr. BEIQUE: I intend to support the motion which, I understand, has been made by the honourable member for Alma (Hon. Mr. Foster) that the Committee rise. The reason why I propose to support that motion is that I have been convinced by the remarks which he made, and which have been supported by the honourable member from Wentworth (Hon. E. D. Smith), that the Bill has not been properly prepared. It may be on proper lines. I am quite in accord with the idea that the consumer should be protected, but we must bear in mind that it is the consumer who has to pay finally.

Hon. Mr. EDWARDS: Certainly.

Hon. Mr. BEIQUE: And if we load the manufacturer, or, in this case, the farmer, with a large additional expenditure, it will be the consumer who will have to bear the expense ultimately, and it is quite plain to me that this is not the time to adopt new legislation which would cause the scrapping of a large quantity of materials.