

*Cold Storage Act*

accomplished in any locality by any of these agencies. If the principle is sound I think it should be applied to everyone. In Nova Scotia, so far as fish products are concerned, it is my opinion that considerable private capital would be invested in cold storage plants if government control were abandoned. It is very difficult to-day to attract private capital to any business which is subject to severe government control and regulation of rates. As the minister himself stated on Friday last, there has been so much criticism in recent years of the management and direction of cold storage plants that private investment in them has been discouraged. Give them the opportunity to do business with the same freedom as obtains in other industries and I think there will be forthcoming all the capital that is necessary. I quite concede that if institutions of this kind are to be subsidized there must be state control and regulation. It is also true, perhaps, that even though not aided by the state they should be regulated to some extent.

I am not going to the extent of opposing this measure, but I doubt its utility, for our experiment with state-aided cold storage plants has not been successful in any respect. Indeed, I think this might be a very good opportunity to abandon the act altogether and see what will happen in the development of these plants without any aid from the state. However, I have no doubt that the bill will be thoroughly considered by the Committee on Agriculture.

Mr. L. H. MARTELL (Hants): Mr. Speaker, cold storage, in so far as it relates to improved facilities for fruit growers in Nova Scotia, is of vital importance. I cannot agree with the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Maclean), whose experience, it would seem, has been a very bitter one. He is undoubtedly in favour of every possible government expenditure that will go toward the improvement of his constituency. But the people of western Nova Scotia—and I am referring to my own constituency—are in need to-day of some sort of cold storage or pre-cooling plants in which they can place their fruit when the market does not enable them to sell at a price that will yield a reasonable return for their labour. The hon. Minister of Agriculture, in the course of his remarks in reply to the hon. member for Halifax referred to the North Atlantic fisheries, and also to the Port Hawkesbury cold storage plant and one or two others. It is true that these plants may not have been a great commercial success, but if the hon. member for Halifax will look into the question without philosophizing

[Mr. A. K. Maclean.]

upon economy, he will find that cold storage has been of inestimable value to the fishermen of Nova Scotia. The other day I referred to the fact, as also did my colleague from the county of King's (Mr. Robinson) that there were thousands upon thousands of barrels of apples down in the Annapolis valley, so-called, for which the people there could find no market. If we had these cold storage or pre-cooling plants these apples could be kept until such time as they could be placed on the market at a price to yield a reasonable return. The hon. member for Halifax spoke merely from the point of view of Halifax. We of the western counties are speaking—

Mr. MACLEAN (Halifax): If I may interrupt my hon. friend, I would deny to him the right to say that I was speaking primarily for Halifax. I appeal to the House and ask hon. members if any portion of my remarks justify my hon friend's making such an unwarranted statement. If he wishes to discuss the question, let him do so intelligently.

Mr. MARTELL: My hon. friend is discussing the matter with a view to getting away from any improvement in cold storage plants that will go to aid the industry of agriculture in Nova Scotia.

Mr. MACLEAN (Halifax): My hon. friend is wrong in saying that.

Mr. MARTELL: The hon. member can make his own interpretation of it; that is the interpretation I place upon it, and I intend to stand by my own. The bill that the minister has introduced has a tendency to encourage the fruit grower; the only objection I have to it is that it does not cover private corporations engaging in the cold storage business. In many cases the carrying out of the co-operative idea has not been successful, and people are loath to engage in a co-operative business. In the western counties of Nova Scotia there are people who are ready to erect a cold storage plant. The hon. member for Halifax, in his wisdom supernal, said he did not know of any demand having been made for cold storage plants in Nova Scotia, but if he examines the files in the Department of Agriculture he will find that within the last week or so I presented to the hon. minister a communication from persons in the county of Hants asking that the government give them a subsidy for the purpose of the erection of a cold storage or pre-cooling plant in the town of Windsor. My hon. friend may live in Halifax, but the city and county of Halifax is not the province of Nova Scotia. I repeat that the minister in bringing this measure before the House is taking a step in the best