

Customs Act

it in committee of the whole. However, I think the minister should come forward with more information.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I gather that the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) has made a suggestion by way of a point of order that instead of the bill being referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs it should be dealt with in the committee of the whole House.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I had made that suggestion informally, and since there was agreement on it, I assumed that the necessary disposition had been made. However, if it is required that I make a motion to amend for that purpose, I am quite prepared to do so; on the other hand, it could come from the government side. If the minister or someone on his behalf will make that motion, that the bill be read a second time and sent to the committee of the whole and dealt with this day, I will be glad to second it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) on the same point of order.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to make it clear that at least one of our members would like to speak to the bill while we are still on second reading. At the end of second reading, we will agree that the bill be referred to the committee of the whole.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Stanbury) on the same point of order.

Mr. Stanbury: That would be agreeable to the government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I gather that it is the wish of the House that the order be amended by unanimous consent. Accordingly, when the motion is put the minister would move that the bill be read a second time and be referred to the committee of the whole. The hon. member for Scarborough West (Mr. Harney).

Mr. John Harney (Scarborough West): Mr. Speaker, after the very able and satisfactory introduction given to the bill by the minister I was tempted to stand up and say very simply "We agree". I say this despite the fact that our group has always hesitated to be caught agreeing with anybody, even with consenting adults. However, the remarks of the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) perhaps raised more questions than they settled. For example, I am totally confounded, dumbfounded and unfounded—perhaps that is not the right word—by what he meant when he spoke of unnecessary smuggling. I have no idea what unnecessary smuggling is. I know what smuggling is, but under what definition of law there may be unnecessary smuggling I cannot tell. Therefore, I await the committee stage with bated breath.

● (1240)

I was going to quote some lines from Pope, but I think I had better not. Perhaps when we come to clause by clause inspection of the bill I can give verse-by-verse comment.

[Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West).]

We think that this is a very necessary and appropriate amendment to the act. The one question which we wish to raise is simply this: will this measure make the customs service provided with respect to goods transported by sea consistent with the service provided with respect to goods transported by air, rail and truck? If it will, then, according to the minister's remarks, the act will become thoroughly consistent in its application.

Overwhelmed as we are, I will end by saying that although \$1 million today is not worth what it was worth a number of years ago when a member on the government front benches said, "What's a million?", it still is a great deal of money. I do not think the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) will deny that. We at this end of the House agree to second reading.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. McCleave in the chair.

The Chairman: The House in Committee of the Whole on Bill C-189, to amend the Customs Act. There is only one clause in the bill. Shall clause 1 carry?

On Clause 1—

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Chairman, having put a number of questions to the minister during the second reading debate and having anticipated that he would provide some answers, we can hardly be expected to agree immediately to clause 1. While the minister's officials are coming into the chamber in order, perhaps, to supply some technical information, perhaps the minister would make some remarks of a general nature about matters which are within his ken. Hopefully, as well, we shall hear from the hon. member for Scarborough West. I wondered when he rose to speak noting that he had not been given sufficient advance warning to know even the number of the bill. I know that handling these customs matters is not his usual task. I was disappointed at the hon. member's not quoting us some lines. He is always delightful when he calls on his vast store of literary knowledge and makes a humorous and interesting speech. We were deprived of his humour in the debate on the preceding stage; perhaps at this stage he will do what he suggested.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Do not tempt him.

Mr. Harney: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really did not intend to quote any verses. However, since I have been invited, I cannot resist. In listening to the hon. member for Edmonton West I was reminded of some lines from Pope which go like this:

Dullness is ever apt to magnify,

As things loom large which we through fog descry

The Chairman: I remind hon. members that the discussion is on Clause 1.