

Commercial Corporation

Mr. MacKINNON: That is why they are not here.

Mr. GREEN: That, I submit, is not correct. I would ask the opinion of the leader of the house.

Mr. MACKENZIE: The officials may be present at any time the minister desires to have them here.

Mr. MacKINNON: They would have been here if I had understood that.

Mr. GREEN: The minister in his statement dealing with the purchasing of those commodities under international control said something about the Canadian export board importing them. I had understood that the work of the Canadian export board was to purchase goods in Canada and export them. We would like to know whether the work of the board went farther and included the purchase of goods to be imported into Canada and, if so, how far the board went in that direction. We are entitled to know that while we are in committee on the resolution.

Mr. JOHNSTON: As far as I can see, the bill goes beyond the ordinary conception of trading relations. How does this Canadian Commercial Corporation handle the goods it gets from outside countries when it brings them into Canada? What will happen after they get into Canada? I take it that the government would not go into the business of retail selling, but would distribute, for example, to a firm or other distributors. What would be the method of disposing of merchandise once it came into the country?

Mr. MacKINNON: When Canadian firms wish to buy in foreign countries where there is at present no machinery for private trading, this corporation will step in and do that buying.

Mr. JOHNSTON: It will take the orders.

Mr. MacKINNON: Yes, just as agents.

Mr. JOHNSTON: It will purchase the goods and bring them back and turn them over to companies in Canada?

Mr. MacKINNON: That is correct.

Mr. JAENICKE: Will the corporation handle grain and other agricultural products?

Mr. MacKINNON: No, because there are facilities for handling those commodities at the present time.

Mr. BENTLEY: I presume the corporation will act as agent or broker for the federated consumer cooperatives and other organizations

[Mr. Green.]

of that nature doing business in this country in bringing supplies from overseas, the same as for private business.

Mr. MacKINNON: The corporation will act for anyone in need of the special services which it will provide.

Mr. GREEN: Will the minister answer the question I asked a few minutes ago as to the way in which the Canadian export board has been purchasing and importing commodities under international control such as sugar, tea, oils and fats?

Mr. MacKINNON: I did not give the hon. member for Vancouver South the correct information earlier. I am informed that up to the present time none of these articles has been purchased by the Canadian export board but has been handled by the commodity prices stabilization corporation of the Department of Finance.

Mr. GREEN: Then this importing business is to be transferred from the stabilization board to the new corporation. Is that the plan?

Mr. MacKINNON: Eventually that may happen. This corporation is not taking over the commodity prices stabilization board, but is actually performing certain operations which are not being dealt with by the stabilization board. I am informed that this corporation is not going to become involved in subsidies in any way. The purchases which are being made by the commodity prices stabilization board have to do with subsidies.

Mr. GREEN: Then the commodity prices stabilization board will continue to import sugar, tea, oils and fats. These commodities will not be imported by the new corporation.

Mr. MacKINNON: Not at present.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in. Mr. MacKinnon thereupon moved for leave to introduce bill No. 251, to establish the Canadian Commercial Corporation.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

SUPPLY

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Golding in the chair.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Demobilization and reconversion—

510. To provide for expenses in connection with prize courts, \$10,000.

Mr. MacNICOL: Have the prize courts been performing any functions during the year 1945-46?