

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I should like to repeat my statement that the salt fish is for export purposes, not for domestic consumption. My honourable friend has spoken of fresh fish. Fresh fish is a perishable product which cannot be kept long. In many instances fishermen live in small villages where there are no cold storage facilities. Furthermore, the market for fresh fish is in Canada, and there is already an over-production for that market. We are trying to relieve this condition by securing an export market for salt fish. The fact that the salt fish producer, being unable to sell his product, turned to the fresh fish market, was one of the reasons why that market was depressed. We want to turn the tide of production towards the export market. If we can do that, both the salt fish industry and the fresh fish industry will benefit. However, all these matters can be threshed out in committee, where we shall have before us representatives from the Maritime Provinces.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read the second time.

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I move that this Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce. I think that committee should meet at eleven o'clock to-morrow; and I would suggest to the Chairman of the Committee on Internal Economy that he should arrange to have his committee meet at another hour, so as to give the Committee on Banking and Commerce the right of way.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I am very glad this Bill is going to the Committee on Banking and Commerce. I may say that I have received a telegram, dated to-day, from the Fisheries Committee of the Lunenburg Board of Trade, expressing opposition to this measure. I shall hand the telegram to the Chairman of the Committee on Banking and Commerce, who may desire to send a telegram to the Lunenburg committee to inform them they will have the privilege of attending before our committee.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I am informed that a telegram has come from the Halifax Board of Trade—

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: This is from Lunenburg.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: —and that a representative is on the way to Ottawa.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: I have also received a telegram from the great fish specialist of this House, the honourable

Hon. Mr. L'ESPÉRANCE.

senator from Lunenburg (Hon. Mr. Duff), who is very much opposed to the Bill. In fact I have received two telegrams.

The motion was agreed to.

OFFICIAL SECRETS BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. RAOUL DANDURAND moved the second reading of Bill 92, an Act respecting Official Secrets.

He said: Honourable senators, this is a Bill respecting official secrets, and is merely a consolidation of two English Acts dealing with the same matter. The first of these, The Official Secrets Act of 1911, applied to Canada. As a result of experiences during the war it was deemed advisable by the British Parliament to amend this Act considerably, and in 1920 amendments were made and other provisions enacted. The measure of 1920 expressly declared that its provisions should not apply to Canada. Therefore, if our law were permitted to remain as it is, we should be operating under the old Official Secrets Act of 1911, which in certain respects is obsolete and does not meet present conditions. The present Bill, which comes, of course, under the Statute of Westminster, is in the main a consolidation of the English Acts of 1911 and 1920, the only difference being that it applies to Canada and Canadian conditions.

I do not know whether there is special objection to any clause of the Bill. If there is, it might be indicated to the Senate now, and dealt with in Committee of the Whole.

Right Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN: Honourable members, I am whole-heartedly in favour of this measure. This is the kind of legislation a government exists to enact. It is only proper that we should now have our own laws respecting official secrets and such matters, and should not be dependent upon, and expect our citizens to follow day by day, the enactments of the Parliament at Westminster. This, of course, is largely a replica of the British law; in fact, I doubt if it differs at all.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: The Minister of Justice has said it does not.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Every section seems to me to be necessary, and to be correctly expressed.

I may be forgiven for calling attention to one section. I hope that because I do so it will not be inferred that I am opposed to the Bill. Subsection 2 of section 11 says: