

Mr. POULIOT: But the unanimous consent that was given corroborates what I have just said about cooperation.

Section agreed to.

Sections 3 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

Schedule agreed to.

Preamble agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

THE BUDGET

DEBATE ON THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The house resumed from Thursday, March 28, consideration of the motion of Hon. E. N. Rhodes (Minister of Finance) that Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair for the house to go into committee of ways and means, and the proposed amendment of Mr. Ralston, and the amendment to the amendment of Mr. Coote.

Mr. R. K. ANDERSON (Halton): Mr. Speaker, at eleven o'clock last evening I was about to say that the trade agreements negotiated in 1932 have consolidated the empire on a lasting basis of mutual benefit and security. A consolidated British empire is the world's best guarantee for universal peace, without which there can be no well-ordered advance or security. The Prime Minister in negotiating those agreements laid the best foundation that he could for his policy of reform of the capitalist system in this country and he has since then taken progressive steps to bring that about.

In 1933, for instance, a committee was set up of members of this house to investigate the spread between the producer and the consumer in the price of milk. That investigation revealed a deplorable condition in and around the city of Montreal. The middleman had extorted an unusual toll for his services. He had exploited the consumer and cheated the producer of milk.

Another committee was set up to investigate conditions in the tobacco industry. This industry was found to be in a somewhat similar condition. The manager of one of the companies had exacted the highest toll that the trade would bear. Two of these capitalist companies, with their long tenuous Shylock-like fingers, took their pound of flesh without regard to the misery or want of their victims, and it is no wonder that the people of this country are making a demand that the capitalist system should be remedied and its abuses corrected.

In 1934 a further step was taken in the passing of the Natural Products Marketing Act. This act was for the purpose of controlling and stabilizing the marketing of natural products from the land, from the sea and from the forest. That act has been in operation now for about one year, and many industries have taken advantage of it and have found it to their benefit. It could be of great assistance to the farming community, for whose benefit it was designed, if they would take advantage of it. The hon. member for Battle River (Mr. Spencer) mentioned yesterday that it was a good bill but that the farmers in western Canada had been rather dubious about asking for its benefits. Up to the present time it has not been in operation in the province of Ontario, but I believe that at the present moment a board has been set up in this province so that the benefits of the act will shortly be available to the farmers of Ontario.

The Canadian Farm Loan Amendment Act was also passed in 1934 to provide greater facilities for credit for the farmer who needed money to improve his stock or his buildings or his implements, the better to work his land. It is intended that this would make credit easier and that the interest rate on farm loans would be reduced. The Farmers' Creditors Arrangement Act is now in operation in Ontario and other parts of the dominion. It is giving very general satisfaction so far as I am aware, and I speak more particularly for my own district. It brings the benefits of the Bankruptcy Act to the farmer. Official receivers have been appointed to assist the farmers in getting their creditors together in order to make mutual arrangements for the scaling down of mortgages and debts and the arranging for lower interest rates. This legislation has proved quite beneficial in those cases where a farmer is unable to pay his debts. It has given general satisfaction in Ontario. I might mention that the expenses of administration, so far as the debtor is concerned, are borne by the government.

In 1934 the government introduced the Bank of Canada Act which brought into being the Bank of Canada which commenced operations this year. The bank will control currency in the dominion and will facilitate trade throughout the empire as well as with foreign countries. It is to be hoped that under this legislation the different countries of the empire will be able to trade on a parity of exchange. I am quite sure it will prove to be beneficial in bringing about further rapprochement between the various parts of the empire. I hope the