

Excise Tax Act

the minister would just clarify that point we would appreciate it. An example of that will be found in item 848, oil country goods, which is in the present Customs Tariff item 848, but appears in the proposed tariff item as 399a. Would the minister just clarify that?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Yes. I explained last night that this reference to some half dozen new sections here, or a new reference to half a dozen sections, arises out of the amendments which are proposed in the Customs Tariff and we know now what these are going to be. They are set out in the resolution to which I trust we shall be coming shortly in the committee of ways and means. This measure of course, will not be coming into effect until the amendment to the Customs Tariff also comes into effect and the references are completely harmonized in that way.

Mr. McIlraith: Thank you. A few moments ago an hon. member questioned me about this. Perhaps I can ask a simple question here that would serve to dispose of the question that was in his mind. I take it that oil country goods or casing that goes into an oil well or a gas well is sales tax exempt but that transmission pipe or tubing, are not sales tax exempt.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): That is correct.

The Deputy Chairman: Is there any discussion on machinery?

Mr. Pickersgill: On this last point, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister whether I understood correctly what he said about this reference to changes in the Customs Tariff. Are we to understand that we are being asked in this bill to assume that the house is going to pass another measure that has not even been submitted yet to the committee of ways and means? Is this not rather taking parliament for granted?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): No, I do not think so, Mr. Chairman. This was discussed last evening. The committee is well aware of the effect of the reference and the reference is to items that are already before the committee of ways and means. It is not a reference to something with which the committee is not already well acquainted. This has been before the house since June 17. The house knows precisely what they are and we shall be dealing with them further in committee of ways and means.

Mr. Pickersgill: That is not my point at all.

Mr. Benidickson: I think the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate, who is usually fairly sharp in his observations, has a point

that while we have had notice of a consolidation of tariff items, we are assuming here that the new tariff items will be as in the schedule in the budget resolution but it is conceivable they will not be. That is the point.

Mr. Pickersgill: The minister does not appear to have got my point. I can well remember when the previous prime minister sat in the seat next to the one the minister is in now he was most scrupulous never to assume, no matter how large a majority was supporting him, that anything would be passed by parliament until it had been passed. Here, it seems to me, we are going pretty far if we are going to put a section in this bill and the minister is going to proceed with it and pass it, making reference to something that is going to be in a bill that has not yet been introduced in the house. Many things might happen. The government might be defeated between the time of the passage of this bill and the passage of the next bill and the law would be in a terrible mess. Hon. members may laugh but we heard a lot of eloquent speeches from this side of the house in the last parliament but one about the rights of parliament. I would not object at all to the minister allowing this section to stand and deal with the rest of the sections and then the committee could rise and we could come back to this bill after the Customs Tariff had passed and thereby preserve the rights of parliament. I do think this is not just a technical point. This is a question of preserving the rights of parliament and of not passing a bill about an act that does not exist. If I am wrong about my facts I would be glad to be corrected.

Mr. Benidickson: I think the hon. member is perfectly correct because there would be new numerals in the customs tariff schedule to which we are now referring. I would think there would be no hesitation on the part of this group in passing the bill with alacrity with the exception of this point. We could rise, report progress and pass it after the other items are actual items in the new tariff schedule.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Chairman, surely it is quite clear that the bill would never be brought into effect unless parliament had also legislated in terms of the changes in the numbers. It is only a matter of changes in numbers. There is no change in the tax and no change in substance. It is simply a matter of the numbers. There is nothing else involved than that. Surely the proper course to follow here is to allow the bill to pass. If hon. members do not wish the bill to be given third reading until the amendment to