

for a cooperative association to ride over the vagaries of our present capitalistic system, with its booms and busts.

I should like to suggest to the government also that they alter the present legislation which provides that new cooperatives must have not less than twenty members, to permit a smaller number to be recognized. There are certain types of cooperatives, such as cooperative farms, housing cooperatives, fishing cooperatives and so on, which may require only five or ten or any number less than twenty for successful operation, and they should not be barred.

I mention these things, Mr. Speaker, because of my disappointment at the failure of the government to mention any of these matters in the budget or, as far as I have been able to see, in the budget resolutions which I believe were distributed yesterday or the day before. As I said last year, I believe the government pays too much attention to people who are opposed to the rise of cooperatives. I believe a great many governments do that. Provincial governments do it. Even though many governments claim to believe in free competition and so on, they are ready to listen to someone who wants legislation to prevent free competition. I notice that this year in the British Columbia legislature, where there is a coalition of the two old parties, there was an amendment to the cooperative associations act. The original act was passed in 1936, and under section 21 (1) of that act it is provided that an individual who freely becomes a contractual member of a cooperative is bound by the terms of the contract between himself and his association. Subsection 4 of that section provides that anyone who has knowledge of a cooperative marketing contract between a producer and an association, who solicits or persuades or aids or abets a producer to sell or deliver any produce otherwise than in accordance with the terms of the cooperative marketing contract, or accepts or receives for sale or for auction or for display for sale any produce of a producer delivered by the producer otherwise than in accordance with the terms of the cooperative marketing contract, shall be liable on summary conviction to a penalty. Now this act has been amended by striking out the word "produce" in subsection 1 and substituting therefor the words "thing caught", meaning fish or other sea product. The act is further amended by striking out subsection 4 and substituting subsections 4 and 5. The new subsection 4 practically repeats the things contained in the old one, but subsection 5 reads:

Every person who uses any property belonging to another person to catch, produce, or collect
[Mr. Bentley.]

fish or other marine products shall not be bound by a cooperative marketing contract with respect to the sale, delivery, or other disposal of such fish or other marine products, and the preceding subsections shall not apply to the sale, delivery, or other disposal of such fish or other marine products.

This relieves the member of his contractual obligation with the association and removes the penalty that can be imposed upon those who aid or abet him in breaking the contract, if the producer is using any property belonging to some other person to catch, produce or collect fish or other marine product. The actual effect of this will be that on the big fishing boats, where the fishermen are paid a share of the catch, even those fishermen who are members of a cooperative association will not be bound by their contract with the association to deliver their share of the catch to the cooperative. It further means that the owner of the vessel or equipment will be able to use every method known to him to solicit, persuade, aid or abet the producer not to fulfil his contract, if he should be inclined to do so. In other words, a fisherman who wants to hold his job on a boat will be practically compelled to sell his share of the catch to whomever the owner of the boat wishes, and in the case of big companies it does not require a great stretch of the imagination to realize that very few of these fish will find their way to a cooperative association.

Whether or not the government of British Columbia had any other reason for doing this than that they felt it was a good thing to do, the fact remains that it will be discriminatory law. I can remember when the same attempt was made to prevent the farmers of the prairies from delivering their grain to the elevators of their choice. As a matter of fact, the private elevator companies were able to prevail upon the government here in Ottawa to take out of the Canada Grain Act that provision which gives the farmer the right to determine the destination of his own grain. To have that right restored took quite a long fight in parliament; it took the introduction of a private bill here by the then member for Mackenzie, Mr. M. N. Campbell; I believe it was called Bill No. 8. I believe this whole matter was discussed before the committee on agriculture, and members of both the old parties on that committee were opposed to the restoring of those rights to the farmers. It became a matter of great concern to those of us in western Canada, and became almost an election issue, to such an extent that, when the election of 1926 was over, the new government finally, after much delay, did reinstate and restore those rights to the farmers.

Under those conditions, and realizing the omissions in the budget, the government can-