

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: I did not expect the honourable member to agree with me.

Hon. Mr. Reid: You knew I would not, from long experience.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: Yes.

Hon. Mr. Reid: I have no apology to make. I am very glad that I have disagreed with you.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: I am glad too.

Hon. Mr. Reid: My conscience is clear on that. Now, if you want a general debate, I will begin one.

Hon. Mr. Howard: You are not in the House of Commons now.

Hon. Mr. Reid: The "family compact" in the Senate does not bother me at all. I have a duty to perform and I am going to perform it. After all, I can speak about this bill as a farmer, and not many who have discussed it can say that. I mean, I can speak as a farmer from British Columbia, not from Quebec.

Hon. Mr. Bouffard: What difference is there?

Hon. Mr. Reid: There appears to be quite a bit of difference.

Hon. Mr. McDonald: Other farmers here may not agree with you.

Hon. Mr. Bouffard: I do not think the senator from New Westminster (Hon. Mr. Reid) knows very much about the farmers of Quebec. He ought to come down to that province some time.

Hon. Mr. Reid: I have been down there. I think I can show wherein this measure would react to the disadvantage of the farmers of Quebec.

Hon. Mr. Bouffard: I do not think you gave the bill a "second look".

Hon. Mr. Reid: I certainly did, and a third look.

Hon. Mr. Robertson: I suggest that the honourable senator be allowed to continue his speech.

Hon. Mr. Reid: I will take on anybody, one at a time, but I do not want half a dozen jumping on me all at once. However, if anybody wishes to inject heat into this matter, I will take him on.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: Go ahead and make your speech.

Hon. Mr. Reid: I will make my speech. You keep quiet too.

I say to honourable senators that it would be of no avail to send this bill to committee. My reason for saying that is that what we are

concerned about is the principle underlying the bill, not the details. Can we get any enlightenment on the principle from departmental officials?

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: No.

Hon. Mr. Reid: The only person who could discuss the principle with us is the Minister of Agriculture or some other member of the cabinet. We do not care whether inspectors or other officials say this or that about how the bill would work; the thing that we are concerned about is the principle of granting to the federal government power to prohibit the shipment between one province and another of not only butter substitutes, but butter itself and milk and ice cream and sherbet. That is the power that will be given to the government if this bill goes through, as I have no doubt it will, for I see the forces marshalled here.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: I resent that remark, Mr. Speaker. There is no marshalling of anybody here. I suggest that the honourable gentleman should be confined to an expression of his views on the bill, and not be allowed to imply that someone else is acting improperly.

Hon. Mr. Reid: I will let the remark stand.

The Hon. the Speaker: If a ruling is required, I would point out that the remark was not addressed to any honourable member in particular.

Hon. Mr. Reid: That is right, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

If the bill is sent to committee the Minister of Agriculture will not be present to discuss with us the subject in which we are interested. The Department of Agriculture will be represented by officials only, and from them we cannot get any answer on that question at all.

The Honourable the Chief Government Whip (Hon. Mr. Beaubien) said, I think, that the low price of butter was caused by something or other having to do with margarine and other butter substitutes.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: No; by low production.

Hon. Mr. Reid: Well, I have travelled through a great deal of Ontario, as well as through my own province of British Columbia, and I have taken occasion to talk to farmers, so I can speak from personal contacts that I have made in two provinces. Here is what I have found. Because of the scarcity of farm labour and the high wages that have to be paid to the men available, plus the high cost of cattle feed in some quarters of the country, large numbers of dairymen have been selling their herds for big prices,