

Farm Machinery

consideration to the recommendations of the committee. In this way we will preserve not only the principle of the bill introduced by the government, but it will be strengthened in the interests of the farmers of Canada.

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, there has been considerable discussion of this bill. The minister is well aware by now that there are some reservations to it and that some legal points have been raised. I believe the mover of the amendment in stating that there was a vast amount of credit tied up for the individual farmer which might go into these syndicates, stated a fact, but perhaps by some legalistic change in language this problem could be relieved. I would be prepared to support the bill and oppose this amendment if the minister would give us an assurance that the bill will go to the committee. I cannot imagine the minister would oppose that step. I know there would be a little delay, but this is one of the first pieces of legislation that the minister has moved and I believe there are serious reservations on this particular aspect of the bill.

It is unfortunate, our rules being what they are, that we are not allowed to do by motion what in fact we want to do. It is true that if we support this amendment in effect we kill the bill. I am not really worried about that because if the minister feels strongly enough about this matter he will reintroduce it in another form in such event. But if the minister would give us an indication whether he is willing to send this bill to committee it would save us a lot of grief and would also help the farmers who want to take advantage of it.

I do not think the minister is a lawyer and certainly I am not, but I did listen with interest to the point which has been made. It is not so much a question of liability because, as the hon. member for Cariboo said, we could insure against that. The difficulty is the tying up of a large amount of credit so that the farmer who takes advantage of these loans would not be able to get any credit from the bank to assist in other parts of his business.

It seems to me that what the minister is suggesting in principle—and I am in agreement with it—is that we make a loan available to allow farmers co-operatively to buy machinery above and beyond that which is purchased by, and is within the capability of, an individual farmer. If he does take advantage of it, then it does not necessarily mean that he has exhausted his capability in the normal sense. This legal point is so interest-

[Mr. Winch.]

ing that I personally would like to see the minister indicate that he is willing to send the bill to a committee for consideration, even with instructions to the committee.

I regret that our rules are so stupid that we cannot do by direct means what we want to do. Doing directly what we want to do will not accomplish in the end what we intend to do. This is a quandary which could easily be solved by the minister giving us this assurance, that the bill will be referred to a committee. I suggest this is not asking for very much because this is new legislation. As I read the bill it is mainly directed towards the purchase of heavy equipment, a field in which the farmer is not normally able to participate, and a few days or weeks will not be that important. I believe the success of this type of legislation is important enough that the minister should give that kind of assurance. If he does not, then I can only come to the conclusion that he is not interested in giving consideration to the arguments which I think have legitimately and honestly been raised.

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I just wish briefly to say that the members of this group have expressed their support in general of the principle and purpose of this bill. But we have also expressed a desire to know more about what the clauses of the bill mean, how the legislation will be administered, and we also wish to ask many other questions. We do not want to kill this bill. Unfortunately, the amendment moved would have that effect because it simply reads:

That this Bill No. C-121 be not now read a second time but that the subject matter thereof be referred to the standing committee on agriculture for further study and report.

I am not sure whether the mover realized that if this amendment carried it would kill the bill. Therefore, in view of the criticisms which have been directed at the bill by members in all parties on the opposition side of the house, and their general desire for more information on the purpose of the bill, its administration and so on, I join with the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters) in urging the minister to agree that this bill be referred to the agriculture committee for study and report after second reading.

Mr. Nugent: Mr. Speaker, might I try to explain to the house what is the purpose of this amendment?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Nugent) has al-