

Motion agreed to and Bill read the third time and passed.

• (1730)

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As part of the arrangement which led to the agreement yesterday under which we have disposed of this Bill, it was generally understood that Private Members' hour would be extended by any time taken up voting. I would suggest, therefore, that we run to 6.30 p.m. with Private Members' hour.

Mr. Pinard: If necessary, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to consideration of Private Members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—PRIVATE BILLS

[English]

UNITED GRAIN GROWERS LIMITED

Mr. Robert Bockstael (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State) moved that Bill S-10, to amend the Act of incorporation of United Grain Growers Limited, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Private Bills and Standing Orders.

He said: Mr. Speaker, United Grain Growers Limited was incorporated under a general act of incorporation passed by the Government of Canada. This Act has been amended eight times since 1911, as need was demonstrated, the more recent amendments being passed in 1967 and in 1976. Due to its uniqueness, this association must apply to Parliament each time it requires an amendment. The United Grain Growers has a membership of 93,540 persons. There are 79,052 membership shareholders and 14,458 Class "A" shareholders.

The purpose of S-10 is to increase the authorized share capital by \$20 million, from \$25 million to \$45 million in shares. It is also to increase Class "A" shares which one individual may hold from 5,000 to 15,000. The United Grain Growers wishes to have the authority to pay additional share dividends, raised from 3 per cent to 5 per cent. It wishes also to have the authority to declare dividends on a quarterly or semi-annual basis instead of on an annual basis only.

This company is unique and does not come under blanket corporations. It has 36,947 members in Alberta, 32,921 members in Saskatchewan and 19,499 members in Manitoba. This amendment is to allow the company to take care of expansion, provide working capital and to provide greater dividends to the grain growers of the western provinces. I urge the House, therefore, to approve the passage of Bill S-10, which was approved in the Senate.

United Grain Growers Limited

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my Party, I support the Bill which has just been introduced by my good friend, the Hon. Member for St. Boniface (Mr. Bockstael). My understanding was that this Bill was going to come up a little later this week, and there are a number of our Members who wanted to participate in this debate. However, having regard to the fact that there is some urgency, we certainly would not want to delay the passage of this Bill, although we want to ensure that it is properly considered.

I share the view of my hon. friend that the United Grain Growers has a very outstanding record of service and performance to the grain industry, the agricultural industry and, indeed, to the producers. United Grain Growers is the oldest farmer-owned commercial organization in Canada. It was established in 1906 and it has for more than 75 years been part of the western agricultural scene. It has moreover, Mr. Speaker, been accredited as a very objective spokesman for the agricultural industry, not only for the grain producers but for agriculture as a whole. I believe although it is primarily interested in the grain handling, purchasing and transportation aspect of agriculture, its operations and its interest extend far beyond those perimeters.

It was very interesting during the course of the Crow debate to note the position taken by the United Grain Growers on behalf of agriculture as a whole. I believe we all recognize that it approached this subject with a broader point of view that simply from the standpoint of the grain producing sector, recognizing that the livestock and processing industries are all integral and vital parts of the total agricultural scene. I believe that when we look at the organization as a whole, we must recognize that it is very much a part of the western Canadian agricultural scene. I feel it is also fair to say that it really is bound up in the economic, social and rural fabric of western Canada.

The Hon. Member has pointed out that there are some 96,000 members owning some 500 licensed elevators. Something which I think has to be noted is that this company has pioneered in providing service in the areas of the north, for example, the Peace River district and the northern parts of the provinces. It has clearly provided a service where previously the service had not been all that good. As an organization, it has seen fit to move into those areas where others have not been quite as prominent.

I believe when one looks at the fact that it is an organization which covers very broadly the three Prairie Provinces, and when one looks at the membership as provided by a document given to me by the Hon. Member for St. Boniface, one sees some 36,000 of the shareholders reside in Alberta, 32,900 in Saskatchewan and 19,499 in the Province of Manitoba, with some 4,000 other members. This clearly reflects the western agricultural scene.

I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, whether it is the intention of the House to proceed with this Bill.