

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

and present procedures with regard to the expropriation of land for highways, for power lines, for gas pipe lines and for other purposes required by the government in question, whether it be federal, provincial or municipal. They have also suffered to a great extent during the last couple of years from expropriations necessary under the terms of the Columbia River treaty.

• (10:20 p.m.)

This matter is of increasing concern to farmers across Canada, and on that account a special meeting of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture was held in May to consider all aspects and to study the question carefully. I might say that in no place in Canada, either under federal or under provincial authority, do procedures and principles which are followed in connection with the expropriation of lands and of rights to the use of land give farmers an entirely fair break. It all depends on the government or the agency that is expropriating the property. In some cases there has been little cause for dissatisfaction, but in the majority of cases, in my experience, injustice has been done to many people.

This meeting was called because the overall bargaining position of the farmer is weak compared to the bargaining power of the authority that wishes to take over his property. As a result of this meeting, the following memorandum regarding a solution to the problem was passed which reads as follows:

Experience of those at the meeting, it was noted, indicates that the expropriated property-owner in the city similarly receives less than justice, as often as not.

The solution to the problem, the meeting concluded, must be found in:

Effective united action by affected property-owners in cases of expropriation. Without the strength that comes by uniting together the small property-owner is in a well-nigh hopeless position of weakness.

Improved legislation that will spell out the rights of the property-owner in detail, and provide fair and economical means for ensuring that these rights are realized through adjudication and legal processes.

Improved service to property-owners by their farm organizations and, especially, stepped up programs of information to farmers about their rights under the law.

Then the meeting went on to recommend:

—that in the near future the Canadian Federation of Agriculture follow up its oft-repeated demand for improved federal legislation with detailed legislative proposals to government for consolidation and amendment of present federal legislation dealing with expropriation.

The meeting also discussed some other questions. It was on this account that I asked my question of the Minister of Agriculture on

June 12 which Your Honour ruled out of order.

It is very interesting to note that the parliamentary secretary who is going to reply to my appeal is, I think, sympathetic to my proposals. He graduated from the Ontario Agricultural College some 30 years or more after I entered the institution, so I feel I should get a very sympathetic response to my appeal. I have been informed by a former graduate of the college that the parliamentary secretary has voiced very strong opinions on this question to local farmers organizations at a time when he was a county representative in the province of Ontario. I feel therefore I really have an ally this evening, and I trust that when he replies he will demonstrate this by his proposals and suggestions.

On June 12, I asked the following question:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the concern of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture with the procedures and principles followed in connection with the expropriation of land, would the minister inform the house if the views of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture on the question of expropriation will be referred to the next dominion-provincial conference on agriculture?

I asked that question because I think that a dominion-provincial conference would be an excellent medium in which to thrash out questions between federal and provincial governments and get, shall I say, some order in dealing with this situation which is of great concern to the farmers all across Canada.

Mr. Bruce S. Beer (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I wish at the outset to express my appreciation to my fellow alumnus for bringing this important matter to the attention of the house. By way of introduction, I may say that the hon. member for Kootenay West really has no idea what an important role he has played in shaping my career. He has made reference to the fact that we are graduates of the same institution. As a matter of fact, when I was thinking of attending a university or college I looked round to decide which one I should attend, and one of the measures by which we appraise a university is by the calibre of its graduates. So I thought of the Ontario Agricultural College, noted that Hon. John Bracken was a graduate of that college, a man who has performed very outstanding service to this country and in this parliament. I also noted that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta was a graduate and that the noted writer and economist Mr. Galbraith had been a graduate as well as the hon. member for Kootenay West.