

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, July 10, 1975

The House met at 11 a.m.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

PROPOSAL TO DEFER RULING ON BILL C-66

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Yesterday an interesting point of order was raised by the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert).

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to raise a point of order. I do not wish to appear impolite toward the Chair, but there has been a change of business and Bill C-66 will not come under discussion, at least in the earlier part of the day. I have consulted with the government House leader and others, and I respectfully suggest that it would make a more coherent record if Your Honour would defer your ruling until the time we begin the debate on Bill C-66. I would ask Your Honour to do that.

Mr. Speaker: I do not have the slightest hesitation in agreeing with the suggestion of the hon. member for Edmonton West. The reason I had prepared the ruling and was prepared to deliver it this morning was that I did not want to delay the House from the consideration of Bill C-66 any further, because it was our understanding that that was to be the order of business at eleven o'clock. If there is a change, perhaps the Chair could be advised now, and I would be happy to defer the ruling until the House resumes consideration of that measure.

Mr. Baldwin: Unless the ruling will prohibit the bill from being debated?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, there had been some discussions amongst the House leaders—at least amongst some of them—and it had been agreed that we would call Bill C-50, which is one of the bills on the list of items I announced earlier. We had hoped that we might have reached this the other day, but we did not, and there is agreement that perhaps we would conclude third reading before one o'clock.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have no objection to this switch, although it just so happens that I was not informed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION ACT

AMENDMENTS TO PROVIDE FOR DEFINITION OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY AND BASE PRICE

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture) moved that Bill C-50, to amend the Agricultural Stabilization Act, be read the third time and do pass.

Mr. Bert Hargrave (Medicine Hat): Mr. Speaker, this is probably one of the most important agricultural issues, much more important than most hon. members appreciate. I am most anxious to take part in this third reading debate, especially in view of the fact that during the report stage I had just barely begun my remarks when the adjournment hour was reached. The next time the bill was considered at report stage was during the week in which the committee was holding hearings in western Canada on the other stabilization bill brought in by another member of the cabinet. I must say that I was deeply disturbed that an agricultural debate of such importance would be proceeded with when 25 members of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, who are all from agricultural ridings, were away hearing representations on the other bill. In all truthfulness I must say that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) must be desperate indeed to have his legislation passed if he has to resort to this doubtful technique.

An hon. Member: Well said.

Mr. Hargrave: To go back briefly to my remarks at the second reading stage of this bill, I had concerned myself with two aspects. One dealt with that topic which was marginally noted as "other powers", and the reference there was to the possibility of supply-management. The other one was the new feature, the top-loading feature. Most of my remarks will relate to the top-loading feature, but first I think it is important that I make the comment that I regret very sincerely that wool was not included as one of the named commodities in Bill C-50. I think that the sheep and wool industry is the forgotten agricultural industry in Canada, and it has been for some time.

Mr. Stevens: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hargrave: It has been ever since World War II. I suggest it was a sad day for the sheep and wool industry of Canada when this government, under the previous minister of agriculture, wiped out the wool deficiency program. It was the last straw for an already struggling commodity group. The reasons advanced by the present minister and his former deputy minister for dropping the wool deficiency program were unrealistic and inappropriate to say the least. They suggested it had to be dropped because it was not accomplishing the original objective. How could it, Mr.