

*Government Orders*

That does not mean that he is not interested in this legislation. He has a keen interest in this legislation.

I also want to point out that, in the committee hearings, we did hear from some of the groups that the hon. member for Mackenzie had raised concerns about, such as the Third World, which is the Ten Days for World Development, the United Church, and the Environmental Law Association. Those are some of the people we have heard from.

The intent of Motion No. 1 is to exclude cereal and vegetable varieties from the eligibility for protection under plant breeders' rights. This would not only affect cereal and vegetable varieties, but would have implications for all species. If Canada is to join the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, then our legislation must apply to the largest number of species available. This is a requirement of the Convention establishing the International Union.

The effect of this motion would therefore be to prevent Canadian membership of the International Union. This would mean that Canadian plant breeders would not obtain the right to protect their varieties in other countries, thus forfeiting royalty payments back to Canada. We are already losing millions of dollars because Canadian corn and soybean varieties, bred by Agriculture Canada, are unprotected in Europe and so are sold without royalties. The direct effect of this motion on cereals and vegetables would be to discourage investment in breeding varieties of these kinds in Canada. Foreign variety owners would be reluctant to permit their varieties to be sold in Canada where they could not be protected.

As is currently the case, those most penalized by this motion would be those in smaller agricultural areas such as the Maritimes. There are cereal varieties bred for areas with similar climatic conditions in Europe. However, the breeders are reluctant to allow their varieties to be sold in Canada when there is no return.

If vegetables are to be interpreted as including potatoes, then the impact of this motion would be very detrimental to seed potato producers in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. These producers would like to be able to multiply seed of Dutch potato varieties to sell on the export market. The Dutch variety owners are

interested in having their varieties multiplied in Canada, but only if their rights can be protected. At the present time, there are numerous Dutch potato varieties representing substantial potential export market for Canadian producers, but these varieties are withheld from Canada because the breeders of the varieties cannot have their rights protected.

• (1620)

This motion is directly contrary to the wishes that the agriculture and horticulture producers expressed to the legislative committee studying Bill C-15. Both the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, speaking for agriculture producers, and the Canadian Horticulture Council appeared before the committees and supported the legislation.

I would like to read a letter into the record that was addressed to the Minister of Agriculture. It is dated April 23, 1990, and states:

Dear Mr. Mazankowski:

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture is becoming concerned that the Act Respecting Plant Breeders' Rights (Bill C-15) is being unduly delayed within the parliamentary process.

Our members feel strongly that the legislation will have numerous benefits for Canadian agriculture. These include encouraging the development of new agriculture crop varieties as well as facilitating the exchange of propagating material between Canada and other countries.

We should point out that many of the caveats which our organization has had with respect to PBR have already been addressed directly in the Bill, by the Committee amendments—In addition, because Bill C-15 is enabling legislation other issues raised in our brief to Committee will be addressed by the development of regulations specific to each agricultural crop. We are confident that a co-operative effort will result in the development of effective regulations.

At this point we feel that your Government should give a high priority to the passage of Bill C-15, and you can be assured that our organization will be supportive of these efforts. Further delays in the parliamentary process will only postpone the potential benefits the farm community may derive from this important legislation. Thank you in advance for your efforts.

That is signed by Mr. Don Knoerr, the president of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

These two organizations did not suggest any limitations on the crop kinds which should be covered. The producers support the legislation because they want more improved varieties of all crops. They realize that those varieties will only be developed or made available