

PRAIRIE FARM ASSISTANCE BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. Wishart McL. Robertson moved the second reading of Bill 46, an Act to amend the Prairie Farm Assistance Act, 1939.

He said: As honourable senators are aware, the Prairie Farm Assistance Act provides for payments to farmers in the spring wheat area on a cultivated acreage basis where the crop yield is low. The purpose of the legislation now before us is to assist in maintaining *bona fide* farmers over the winter and to enable them to continue their farming operations. All farmers in the spring wheat area contribute one per cent of the returns from their marketed crop to the fund from which these payments are made.

The Act, which has been in effect since 1939, has been amended from time to time. In 1950 it was amended to exclude from payments under the Act all Crown and municipally owned lands which had been leased or granted to farmers since 1940, because experience indicated that much of the land which had been or might be so leased was submarginal for farming purposes. It was considered that accessible lands which had not been taken up prior to 1940 would not likely be of a suitable nature for cultivation.

Following the amendment of last year, representations were made to the effect that since 1940 certain provincial lands which were suitable for cultivation had been opened up for settlement. These lands had not previously been made available for settlement because of the lack of access roads or other facilities. Field inspection carried out by the department substantiated these representations.

For the most part lands in these areas, along with similar lands still to be opened up, lie north of township sixty, and the submarginal lands which it is desired to exclude from the awards lie to the south of that line. I particularly call the attention of honourable senators to the words "south of that line," for they have a bearing on the amendment made in the other place, to which I shall presently refer. The purpose of the amendment is to allow these arable lands to benefit from the provisions of the Act, and that is accomplished by removing them from the restrictive provision introduced by the amendment of 1950.

If honourable senators will refer to the bill before them they will note that subparagraph (vi) of section 1 reads as follows:

(vi) lands lying north of township sixty in each of the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia.

That paragraph was within the past hour amended in the House of Commons to read:

(vi) lands lying north of the south boundary of township sixty in each of the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia.

I assure honourable senators that the amendment is in keeping with the general intention and purpose of the Act, and I ask the house to give favourable consideration to this measure.

Hon. Mr. Marcotte: Honourable senators, I do not think any extensive remarks from me are necessary. This bill appears to be of an administrative nature and, speaking for myself and I am sure for those members on this side who are not in the chamber, there is no objection to the measure.

The motion was agreed to, and the bill was read the second time.

THIRD READING

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall the bill be read the third time?

Hon. Mr. Robertson: With leave of the Senate, now.

The motion was agreed to, and the bill was read the third time, and passed.

PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES (NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION) BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. Wishart McL. Robertson moved the second reading of Bill 15, an Act to provide for privileges and immunities in respect of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

He said: Honourable senators, this bill follows the general scheme adopted in 1947 to give effect to the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. The measure calls for approval and confirmation of the agreement set out in the schedule to it. If and when this bill becomes law, the Canadian government will take the steps called for by the Agreement to effect Canadian ratification of the agreement.

The bill further provides that the Governor in Council may take such action as may be necessary to carry out the obligations, duties and rights of Canada under the agreement when it comes into force. Although no definite assurance can be given, it is unlikely that there will be any large-scale exercise of privileges in Canada by the organization. For this reason, the bill was drafted in the simplest and shortest form possible.

The agreement follows generally the form of agreement which, beginning with the