

It has been strengthened in that the advisory committee will now assist the commissioner of plant breeders' rights in the manner in which the act is applied in providing licensing. It will also have a responsibility to assist the commissioner in the requirements relating to licensing of plant breeders' rights, to advise the commissioner of the plant breeders' interpretation of "reasonable price" and other key sentences in the law itself, such as "widely distributed" and "reasonable remuneration", because these are key points.

For example, we should not put in place a regime that allows a multinational corporation to charge unreasonable prices for their seed, whether it is wheat, barely, corn or whatever. Certainly that is not in the public interest. If they do not provide enough to the marketplace that prices are driven up higher, that is not in the public interest. If they charge an unreasonable remuneration, that is not in the public interest.

So, the advisory committee has been mandated to provide assistance to the commissioner in deciding on the interpretation of those particular issues. Beyond that, we put in place an amendment at the committee stage which will provide for those powers to be defined under the regulations and provided for an annual report for the commissioner of plant breeders and the operation of the act.

Those provisions are in there and the commissioner has the power to give a compulsory licence to people if an individual plant breeder is charging an excessive or unreasonable amount in royalty for the seed or plant.

In spite of that, I think there is concern for cereal grains which provide the daily bread for Canadians. Even though those powers are there, there is a feeling that perhaps we should only provide for plant breeders' rights for cereal grains, oil seeds, pulse crops, and so on, for a seven-year period. Generally speaking, that is about the life of most cereal grains as there is usually a better variety which comes on stream.

That is why I put Motion No. 3. Even though there are safeguards, I think this is a new departure, a new regime and a new provision. Unfortunately, the companion Motion No. 7 was ruled out of order because it was put in committee as well. That motion provided for a parlia-

mentary review after seven years. That companion provision cannot be put this afternoon.

I put this motion because I think there are certain people in the industry, certainly people in the farm groups in some areas of the country, who feel that a seven-year plant breeders' rights would be adequate, and would provide a certainty that the plant breeders' rights, or the royalty régime, would not go on over a long period of time. That is why I am putting this Motion No. 3. I think it provides an additional safeguard, even though there is provision for the Commissioner to mandate compulsory licensing if a plant breeder does charge an excessive amount of royalty or remuneration to himself. I put that motion now.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question? The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether or not anyone else intended to rise, but I am prepared to respond to Motions Nos. 1 and 3. I would like to do that after the debate is finished, if anyone else was intending to rise.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is there any further debate with regard to Motions Nos. 1 and 3?

Mr. Althouse: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It would facilitate the debate considerably if the government side would indicate how it intends to dispose of the motion. I think that would then determine whether we can cut the debate off immediately, or whether other people want to continue to try to press the point.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Would you like me to put the question?

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker. I am quite prepared to respond to the two motions.

At the outset, I would like to indicate that we anticipated speaking on this debate much earlier today. We were hopeful that the Minister of Agriculture would be able to be here to take part in some of the debate. Unfortunately, it has been late in the day when we started, and he will be unable to be here to take part.