

Prairie Grain Stabilization Act

prairie grain sale proceeds and to repeal or amend certain related statutes, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Agriculture, and motions Nos. 1 and 2 of Mr. Gleave (page 7252).

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, when the debate concluded the other evening, I just had a brief moment or two to make a few preliminary comments and to move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), an amendment to the amendment. Because this is a fresh day, it might be worthwhile for me to read the amendment. It is as follows:

That the amendment be amended by deleting all the words after "deduction" and substituting therefor the following "of the amount by which the costs of production for the crop year within which a levy under section 9 is deducted exceeds the costs of production for the crop year ending on July 31, 1970."

In debating this particular subamendment, Mr. Speaker,—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member will recall that when he gave notice of his intention to move the amendment, the Chair expressed some doubt about the procedural acceptability of the amendment. Before the hon. member proceeds to debate the substance of the motion, I wish to point out that the Chair still has a reservation about whether it can accept the amendment. If the hon. member and other members can assist the Chair, it might be the consensus of members of the chamber that we now hear argument on that point. I might indicate the Chair's concern. I am just making a preliminary comment and I will certainly listen to argument with an open mind.

It seems that in his proposed amendment the hon. member is substituting another method of determining the particular matter dealt with in the section; in other words, he is substituting one thing for another. At this stage, where there are amendments to motions at the report stage, the Chair must be very sure that the amendment does not go beyond the four corners of the motion it is purported to amend. With those preliminary observations, I will appreciate any assistance hon. members can give to the Chair.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): I did not, as has been suggested, give notice the other evening of moving a subamendment. I, in fact, moved it. I have reiterated it today because this is a fresh day. I wanted it to be clear in the minds of hon. members.

With regard to the point of order raised by Your Honour, it is not a substitution of a different method, but a question of amending the amendment to put in a particular floor from which certain things are measured. If we look at what clause (c) of subclause (1) says and then proceed to the amendment and subamendment, I think Your Honour will find they are all connected and relevant. Subclause (c) interprets and defines grains sales proceeds. I quote:

"grain sale proceeds" means the amount of the purchase price of grain produced on land described in a permit book and sold by a producer to a licensee,—

Boiled down, I think the meaning of this clause is that grain sales proceeds are the purchase price of the grain after the deduction of certain charges. The amendment

moved by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Gleave) sought to add, after the definition in the bill, the phrase "and after the deduction of the increased costs of production and including stabilization payments, if any." That amendment was in order. It was accepted and it has been under debate for a while. That amendment sought to add another item which would be deductible from the purchase price of the grain. There would be, then, the purchase price of the grain from which would be deducted certain lawful charges as mentioned in the bill itself and, additionally, the increased cost of production. The amendment being in order, the purpose of my sub-amendment, which has been read, is as follows—perhaps I should read it again because it does make an alteration in the words of the amendment by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar. Its intention is to deal with the words after the word "deduction" in the amendment by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar, and then to rephrase certain other parts to clarify what is meant by increased costs of production.

The amendment would provide that those increased costs of production shall be the difference between costs in the crop year in question and in the crop year which ended on July 31, 1970. In other words, the sub-amendment is connected with the amendment and with the original clause, proceeding as follows: There is the purchase price of the grain, less lawful charges as set out in the bill, less increased costs of productions, as set out in the amendment by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar; and this is clarified to say that these increased costs of production shall be measured on the basis of the crop year ending on July 31, 1970. The whole thing is a matter of clarification and being more precise than the wording originally proposed.

In the light of what Your Honour said the other evening when I moved the sub-amendment originally, and the thought which was expressed about its admissibility, I took occasion to read the references in Beauchesne to amendments and sub-amendments. As Your Honour knows, they are voluminous and many of them are not applicable in this case because they deal with matters which are not dealt with here. I should like to refer to two citations. One is Citation 203(1). I believe my sub-amendment meets the requirements set out here. The citation reads:

It is an imperative rule that every amendment must be relevant to the question on which the amendment is proposed.

I submit my amendment meets the test of relevance. It simply identifies the base year from which costs of production are to be measured. I wish to read the whole of Citation 203(1) because sometimes it is possible for hon. members to select only parts which are favourable to the position they are taking.

Every amendment proposed to be made either to a question or to a proposed amendment should be so framed that if agreed to by the House the question or amendment as amended would be intelligible and consistent with itself.

I submit that if this sub-amendment of mine is accepted, and if the amendment is accepted and the bill is amended accordingly, it would be intelligible and consistent with itself. It would be intelligible because it defines and inserts a base year upon which increased costs of production shall be measured. I submit that without such a base