

Advance Payments

Mr. Evans: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the Parties. I think that if you seek unanimous consent, you will find agreement that we should move Bill C-23 into Committee of the Whole and finish all stages of the Bill this afternoon before we move on to Bill C-5.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: We can certainly move on to Committee of the Whole, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the proposal put forward by the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Evans). Is it agreed?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: We will move to Committee of the Whole stage by stage.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Mr. Pepin, for Mr. Axworthy, seconded by Mr. Gray, moves: that Bill C-23, an Act to amend the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act be now read a second time and, by unanimous consent referred to a Committee of the Whole. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Accordingly the Bill stands referred to a Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent. The House went into committee thereon, Mr. Corbin in the chair.

[Translation]

The Chairman: The House is in Committee of the Whole to consider Bill C-23, an Act to amend the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act.

Shall Clause 1 carry?

On Clause 1—*Maximum*

[English]

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Chairman, I do not propose to delay passage of this Bill. The Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council is quite right in saying we would like to pass this Bill through all stages today. But I want to take the opportunity at this time in Committee of the Whole on the first clause of the Bill to make a few observations. Then I want to put a question to the Minister for External Relations who is sitting in for the Minister of Transport.

First I want to associate myself with the remarks that have been made this afternoon by my colleagues and good friends from Red Deer and Vegreville—

Mr. Nystrom: And Yorkton-Melville.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Indeed, Yorkton-Melville. I am going to deal with that in just a moment. But I simply want to say that the opportunity to discuss matters relating to agriculture in

Canada, particularly respecting western agriculture are few and far between in this Parliament. That is why I feel moved now to address a few remarks and to associate myself with some of the thrusts put forward by my colleagues from Red Deer and Vegreville. I want to remind the Government that this Bill gives us the opportunity to reflect upon the very serious lack of policy which this Government has had and continues to have with respect to Western Canada.

• (1510)

I listened to my colleague from Vegreville who, in the administration of the Right Hon. Member for Yellowhead was Minister of Transport. I know from personal experience the outstanding contribution which the Hon. Member made at that time. I recall the sensitivity he showed to the hopes and aspirations of western Canadians. I think of the approach that was taken in terms of the administration of the Right Hon. Mr. Diefenbaker, a western Prime Minister. The Conservative Party has had a tradition of dealing with matters relating to western agricultural problems. They are keen and sensitive to those issues. As pointed out by the Minister in introducing this Bill today, it was Mr. Diefenbaker who introduced the concept of advances on farm-stored grain. His Government brought forward the legislation which we are now amending.

I say with all the sincerity that I have in my body and person that, after the next federal election, it is my hope that we in this country will again have a federal Government that shows sensitivity, that understands the problems of western farmers, and that will include such people as my colleagues from Vegreville and Red Deer. They will be able to speak on behalf of western farmers. They have an idea of what is going on there, not like the paucity of initiatives and policies that we get from this Government.

I listened to the Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville speak in this debate. It reminded me of something that brings to light the changes in western Canada, particularly in the Province of Saskatchewan, which is the most significant and important grain-growing province in this country. My father ran in the federal riding of Yorkton on three occasions, and was not successful. He put up a good fight on behalf of the Conservative Party. At that time the constituency of Yorkton was represented by a Member of the CCF, Mr. G. H. Castelden.

We talk about the disappearance of the family farm in western Canada, Saskatchewan in particular. At the time my father was running on the federal political scene, there were 21 Members of Parliament in the House of Commons from Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan had more Members of Parliament than the Province of Alberta or the Province of British Columbia. At that time Saskatchewan had a higher population, in particular rural population. The family farm was the fabric of the province.