

Prairie Grain Stabilization Act

to elevator companies. It has an indirect relationship to grain producers in the sense that it would save them some grain storage costs, but it is a completely separate item.

The Prairie Farm Assistance Act might have some vague relationship with levies, and if the minister were bringing in some amendments to our crop insurance law then it would be proper for him to couple with those amendments some amendments to the Prairie Farm Assistance Act, or a provision to repeal the act. But again it bears not the slightest resemblance to or has not the slightest relationship with the Prairie grain stabilization fund.

I submit that we have here a bag of tricks. I think this bill plays fast and loose with the rules. Further, it plays fast and loose with the ability of Members of Parliament to judge each of these separate items on its own merit, and to vote either for or against. Placing all of these into the one package inhibits, and I suspect will prevent, many members of this House from dealing adequately with the bill. I respectfully suggest, request and urge the Chair to curtail this practice by ruling that it be not allowed to continue any further. I submit, with all respect, that this practice has been followed too many times during the life of this Parliament. Being a new member, my impression is that it has been followed much more frequently in this Parliament than in any other, though I stand to be corrected on that.

The three clauses of the bill, clauses 32, 33 and 34, are in fact separate from each other and different pieces of legislation. They are put in this bill as a package, and I submit that this procedure is completely unjustified. These clauses should be separated from each other so they can be dealt with on their own merit as separate items of legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): I regret to inform the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar that since he has already spoken he cannot take the floor again.

I have heard the very lengthy and interesting arguments presented both by the minister and hon. members. The point that has been raised by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar is not entirely a novel one. As one who has been in this House for quite a few years, it is a point which I have been expecting to crop up again and again, since the bills presented during the past few years are somewhat different in form from those which some of us have debated in the past.

• (4:30 p.m.)

On the other hand, I quite realize that within our rules there is very little authority for the Chair, at this stage of the proceedings, to divide a bill or ask that it be withdrawn. As one who likes some finality but also likes to avoid making hasty decisions, I suggest that the subject matter be referred to the Speaker for consideration and for a ruling which might affect similar bills in the future.

This is a suggestion only, but the minister might consider the suggestion that this matter should be left in abey-

[Mr. Benjamin.]

ance and another matter proceeded with until such a decision has been presented by the official Speaker of this House.

Mr. Burton: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order which has been raised, and I appreciate what you have just said in respect of this matter, I wonder if I might have a moment to draw to your attention, for consideration while this matter is being reviewed, a statement made by the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board which has a very substantial bearing on the point raised by my colleagues.

I should like to briefly draw attention to one paragraph of the statement made by the minister on March 15. I am sure it will be recognized that this does have a bearing on the point. When the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board presented his revised proposals on March 15, which form the basis for the legislation now being considered, he said in part, "there are very many substantial social and economic questions to be answered before appropriate government action to deal with total returns to grain and oil seed producers can be determined. The special payment of \$100 million this year, combined with improved sales, will assist grain farmers markedly this year and permit time for the careful consideration and discussion required." Of course, the latter part of this statement refers to the permanent features of the plan contained in Bill C-244.

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, I rise essentially on a question of privilege in order to clarify the comments of the last speaker. I should like to indicate that his suggestion that the last statement had anything to do with this bill is erroneous. Rather, it was a reference to the total question of the income position of farmers, without specific relation to the bill itself. As has been made very clear on many occasions, the bill is a totality, and the urging of hon. members to drop the transitional feature would, in effect, practically eliminate it. The totality of the stabilization fund and the repeal of the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act are basically essential to the total position taken in the bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): Is it agreed that consideration of the point raised by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar be deferred and that we proceed with the next order of business?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

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PRAIRIE GRAIN ADVANCE PAYMENTS ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING RATE PER BUSHEL, EMERGENCY PAYMENTS, EXTENSION OF APPLICATION TO RYE, FLAXSEED AND RAPESEED

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration) moved that Bill C-239, to amend the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act, be read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture.