

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

Some hon. Members: Six o'clock.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, could we not move to something else, carry it, and do a really good day's work? Could we not take Motion No. 13 on page 27 of the order paper?

Some hon. Members: Six o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): Do hon. members agree to call it six o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): I have not much to say. I have been taken by surprise. Having listened to a debate on transportation, I am still of the same opinion as I was the other day. If you want to enjoy life and satisfactory transportation, go on foot.

At 5.25 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING DETERMINATION OF PAYMENT FOR WHEAT—EXTENSION OF APPLICATION TO FLAX-SEED, RYE AND RAPESEED

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Lang that Bill C-238, to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, it would seem to me that if the minister responsible for the Wheat Board really meant it when he said that rapeseed, flaxseed and rye would only be brought under the jurisdiction of the Board when it was deemed desirable at some future date, why he would not have omitted this provision from the bill altogether. By making the statement he did, he admitted it was not advisable at this time, unless of course he was trying to placate those who are opposing this part of the bill. It disturbs me that this approach should be taken, seeking authority for the government in

Canadian Wheat Board Act

its own time to implement what this bill would allow without even consulting the producers of these grains on whether they wished such a course to be followed.

There are aspects of the bill one can readily support. The legislation takes account of changes in government policies which have already been put into effect. It updates the whole procedure of grading grain, linking grades with protein content, and it provides for different qualities of grain within specific grades and for varying rates of payment. However, since amendments of this type are coupled with the much more doubtful proposal to which I referred earlier, we find ourselves in a very difficult position. We are, in effect, being asked to support propositions which we agree are reasonable at the same time as we are asked to support other policies with which we cannot agree. It is this omnibus approach to legislation on completely different aspects of particular subject matters that makes it very difficult for us to support what is of a positive nature and at the same time constructively to oppose that with which we cannot agree.

● (8:10 p.m.)

If rye, rapeseed and flaxseed compared in any way to the wheat situation, I think the minister would have some justification for bringing in this legislation. But these three grains are in an entirely different category. When we talk about flaxseed and rapeseed we are talking about products of the edible oils industry. From these grains most edible oils are obtained, at least as far as Canadian agricultural production is concerned.

Even though our export sales of wheat in world markets have declined in recent years, Canada still retains a substantial portion of the world wheat export market, perhaps as much as 20 per cent of that market this year. The situation is entirely different for edible oils; we have only a very small fraction of the world market. In fact, total production of edible oil seeds in Canada represents only 1.8 per cent of world markets. Approximately half of the edible oil seeds produced in Canada are consumed in the home market, and thus rapeseed and flaxseed represent only 0.8 per cent of world exports. In other words, we have only a minute fraction of the total world market for edible oils.

We have learned from our most substantial market, Japan, that the Japanese are not interested in dealing with a government agency like the Wheat Board with regard to rapeseed exports. They have found it necessary as purchasers of Canadian edible oil seeds to ask for the same facilities as the grain exchange offers, and this they will not have if these grains are brought under the control of the Wheat Board. We are told in no uncertain terms by some of the major export consumers of Canadian edible oil that if they have to contend with the type of marketing that would of necessity be that which the Wheat Board uses when it sells wheat, they will go elsewhere for their supply of edible oil seeds.

I should like to ask who is kidding whom. It seems to me that if the government really wanted to help this part of the agricultural industry, it would seek ways and