

*Supply—Agriculture*

and secretary of the council. The name of the present secretary is Mr. Stephen, and if I am correctly informed for a long time, and perhaps even yet, Mr. Stephen was one of the political henchmen of the Minister of Finance.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I have no information as to that.

Mr. SENN: Surely we could not accuse Mr. Stephen or the Minister of Finance of being in favour of a protective measure of this kind, so if the National Dairy Council have advocated protection for the dairy industry it must be because they have been forced to the conclusion, without regard to their own private views, that it is absolutely necessary for their industry.

In conclusion I would repeat that if the Minister of Agriculture is not ashamed of his own private views on this question I think he should let the house know what they are.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: The committee is not interested in them.

Mr. CHAPLIN: A few moments ago the Minister of Finance elicited from the hon. member for Bow River his opinion with regard to the marking of goods in general. Now I think the Minister of Finance might tell us his opinion on the same question.

Mr. ROBB: I am not under cross-examination at the moment. My opinion is that we might profitably go on with the business of the house and pass supply.

Mr. CHAPLIN: The Minister of Finance is not interested now but he was interested only a moment ago, when he questioned the hon. member for Bow River. I think the Minister of Finance should not cross-examine another member if he is not willing to be cross-examined himself.

Mr. ROWE: I think this is a reasonable question to ask the Minister of Finance, but he tells us we should go on with the business of the house. Every year since I have been a member here the estimates of the Minister of Agriculture have been brought down either on a Friday night, when a number of members leave for their homes in Quebec and Ontario, where mixed farming is carried on to the greatest extent—

Mr. LAPOINTE: They should stay here.

Mr. ROWE: I think that is right, but I stay here almost as much as the Minister of Justice does. Surely the minister could give us a clear statement as to where he stands on a question of such importance; surely the government cannot camouflage the people all the time. We would like to know where the

[Mr. Senn.]

government stands on one of the most important questions to the agricultural industry in Canada to-day, and if the Minister of Agriculture cannot tell us perhaps the Minister of Finance could give us that information. Again this year we have the estimates of the Minister of Agriculture coming up at twelve o'clock on the last day of the session, since it is generally understood that the house is to conclude its business to-night and prorogue tomorrow.

Some hon. MEMBERS: No.

Mr. ROWE: I am not particular about it; it does not matter a great deal whether the house closes this week or next week, but this department is one of the most important in the government, and every year the estimates come down either late on a Friday night or within the last day or two of the session. The most important of these estimates have not been touched yet, and now it is twelve o'clock noon on the last day of the session. This is a very important item, and the Minister of Finance says that we should go on with the business of the country.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I do not think these extraneous fiscal matters should be introduced into my estimates. I will have to leave in a few minutes and we are taking up a lot of time discussing a matter which should have been discussed on the budget, and which was discussed.

Mr. CHAPLIN: The Minister of Agriculture says that he has only a few minutes left to complete his estimates; in future these estimates should be brought down before the end of the session.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): I think the last remark of the Minister of Agriculture is wholly unfair.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: What is that?

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): The minister suggested that the debate on the budget was the proper place to bring in these suggestions; I suggest that there has never been a more proper moment than the present one for introducing a matter of this kind.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: To discuss fiscal matters?

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): This particular matter of marking. The Minister of Finance is the one responsible for introducing that aspect into it, because in his usual subtle and tricky fashion he asked a question with the obvious intention of using my answer at some future time; there is no doubt in the world about that.