

only one at a time. Honourable members will recall that last year a wheat acreage reduction plan was dealt with by regulations published in the Canada Gazette of October 13. This Bill to some extent embodies those regulations.

There is no doubt that the three wheat bills are difficult to deal with, in that they involve the expenditure of a good deal of money, but this expenditure is rendered necessary by war-time demands. It is essential that proper supplies of food be sent to our Allies. Wheat, as a matter of fact, is one of the main requirements in time of war, but never in any previous war was there such a surplus of wheat as we have to-day. We are up against two difficulties. We must avoid the risk of not having enough wheat to see us through the war; and we must encourage our farmers to raise wheat when the markets do not want it. If the wheat of Western Canada or of the world to-day had to be sold on market demand it would not command very high prices. Therefore the Government has been supporting the wheat market for the last two years. It is intended by this Bill to continue that support, and also to reduce the acreage in wheat and encourage production of grains that we may need more.

In war-time we need meat, bacon, cheese and eggs; and we may have to produce more butter now that Australia and New Zealand are not in a position to furnish supplies. Up to quite recently Britain did not want any butter from us at all, but was clamouring for cheese and bacon. To-day she also wants milk in large quantities, and wool. Now that the United States, Australia and New Zealand, the great wool-producing countries of the world, are engaged in the war and consuming more wool at home, besides finding greater difficulties in shipping wool overseas, we must make provision to supply the deficiency. We must have wheat, but, as I have said, we have to-day really more wheat than we need. One of the purposes of this Bill is to encourage production of the bacon, cheese, eggs, milk, and wool that may be required during the war.

As first drafted the Bill did not include flax in the substitute crops, but a price was fixed for flax at \$2.25 a bushel. After some consideration it was felt that that was not sufficient to encourage the growing of flax in Western Canada. Those who have lived in the West know that for a time we grew flax extensively. Why? Because it was a kind of crop that you got by the way. You started in with a section of land and broke what you could in June, July and August for wheat next year, but in the meantime you could put in flax

Hon. Mr. MARSHALL.

and so steal an extra crop from the land. The result was we grew great quantities of flax in Western Canada when settlers were bringing their farms into cultivation. That period is past now, and flax is no longer a crop that crowds out wheat. Land in Western Canada has now a fairly liberal supply of weeds, particularly where the weather has been dry; so the growing of flax there is, I am afraid, likely to be more or less disappointing.

As a matter of fact it is not flax at all that we grow in Western Canada; it is linseed. Linseed and flax are virtually twins, but not Siamese twins. Flax is grown to be pulled and woven to make linen, while linseed is a grain we grow to make linseed-meal cakes or oil. In some parts of Eastern Canada flax has been grown, but none in Western Canada so far as I know. Linseed is really the correct word to use, but flax is a very common name and has always been applied to the growing of linseed in Western Canada. Whether as a result of the passing of this Bill the growing of this crop will be stimulated to any great extent is problematical, for the reasons I have already stated.

I have no doubt that several honourable senators who are interested in conditions in Western Canada have followed the discussion of this Bill in the other House. When introduced there it contained a penalty clause for misrepresentation in connection with returns of acreage reduction. The penalty applied whether or not the man making the return knew it was incorrect. The penalty clause was amended by the addition of the words, "who has been knowingly and wilfully guilty." The lawyer members of this House will understand the meaning. A clause was added that no moneys payable under the Bill should be subject to garnishment or attachment, or be assignable either at law or in equity.

I should add that the bonus to be paid for summer-fallow has been reduced from \$4 to \$2 an acre, which is the amount paid with respect to other coarse grains.

I move second reading of the Bill. I would suggest that after it has been discussed it be referred to the Committee on Agriculture, by whom it can be dealt with clause by clause.

Hon. C. C. BALLANTYNE: Honourable senators, I do not pretend for one moment to be very familiar with Western conditions. We are fortunate in having in this Chamber many grain growers with first-hand knowledge of the wheat business, and other members, like my honourable friend from Peel (Hon. Mr. Marshall), who have had experience in Western Canada.

He has told us about flax or linseed oil. That does happen to be a subject that I know something about. Some thirty-six years