

Business of the House

of the house, not of his group but who sit near him, who seem to take a very liberal approach to the problem of private members' bills and who think that every private member's bill should be voted on, except the ones they choose to talk out. These members have chosen to talk out, for example, the Bell Telephone Company bill on a number of occasions. They have asked that other bills be voted on as a principle of reform in this house. I realize the hon. member who moved this bill recognizes the fundamental educational purpose served by debate on a measure of this type. The problem receives proper and careful attention as a result of the kind of debate which this house is undertaking. This is one of the best and the most laudable purposes of the use of this hour, which is set aside from the government business in this house.

I can only conclude, reluctantly, Mr. Speaker, that in its present form this bill does not appear to meet the requirements of the definition of an elevator which would permit the authorities charged with the marketing of grain to have the kind of discrimination they must have to build up a rational and efficient system of grain elevator marketing. If the bill has this serious defect, as I believe it has, I should not like to vote against it, although if compelled to do so I would have to vote against the bill in its present form. But I think the purpose of this bill can be achieved as a result of the debate which has taken place. The hon. member should look at it again, consider a modification in the wording, and then once again bring the matter before the house for reconsideration.

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I do not represent an agricultural constituency but I have listened with a great deal of interest to all the statements from both sides of the house made since five o'clock on Bill No. C-70. There has not been one member who has highly commended the hon. member who introduced this bill. There has not been one member who has not pointed out that there is a problem here which should be considered. Some technical objections have been raised but I do not think they are of sufficient importance to override or overbalance the fact that everyone is in agreement with the hon. member, who has introduced a subject which is worthy of further study.

That being so, Mr. Speaker, and because I think all are in agreement that the bill should not be talked out, I would therefore

move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles):

That Bill No. C-70, an act to amend the Canada Grain Act (off-track elevator licensing) be not now read a second time but that the subject matter thereof be referred to the standing committee on railways, canals and telegraph lines for study and report.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, it is unusual for a minister to take part in the debate on a private member's bill of this kind, but in view of the motion which has just been moved I thought I should say a few words.

I, as a member of this house, should like to consider a little more carefully the implications of the motion which has been made to refer the subject matter of this bill to a committee. As several hon. members have said—and I am very happy to join with them this bill does relate to a problem of some importance; at least it can be so construed. I share the doubts of some of the members who have spoken as to whether the bill does in fact deal directly with the problem which is in the mind of the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Olson).

Mr. Winch: For "study and report", by the committee.

Mr. Sharp: Yes. Perhaps I should say on behalf of the government that the government very well understands the problem, and while the hon. gentleman has brought the matter before the house in the form of this bill it is a problem which is engaging the attention of the government in connection not only with the program of rail line rationalization, which will be proceeding in due course, but also in connection with all the ancillary changes which have to be made in the handling of grain.

Therefore I am a little reluctant to see this motion which has been put before the house decided today. I think we ought to look a little more carefully at the subject. I should like to look carefully at the bill myself before deciding whether it is the most useful way to bring the matter before the committee of this house or to have it decided by the house itself.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Batten): Order. The hour for the consideration of private members' business has expired.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Speaker, I did ask at five o'clock about the business but was told that