

Potash Sale to United States

duction and Saskatchewan employment. Pro-rationing of production in Saskatchewan is nothing more nor less than export control. The Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce refused to exercise its jurisdiction and allowed the Premier of a province to assert that responsibility which the federal government chose not to accept. Setting a minimum price of \$18.75 a ton, which it is now suggested should be raised to \$22.75 a ton, was again controlling the price of an export commodity. The people of Canada, and particularly the people of Saskatchewan, want to know what the federal government did on their behalf in a matter that was absolutely and completely within its jurisdiction.

I submit that if the government fails to produce these papers and to give us this information, it is in fact admitting either that it did nothing in the matter or it agreed to something that was not in the interest of Canadians, particularly in Saskatchewan, but was in the interest of the corporations which owned the potash mines. Therefore, I submit the government was party to this cosy little deal between the Premier of Saskatchewan and the governor of New Mexico. Even though the federal government failed to prevent the government of Saskatchewan from acting in a matter not within its jurisdiction, I hope the government will indicate that it did make some representations on behalf of Canada.

Mr. Steven Otto (York East): Mr. Speaker, having listened to the hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat, I should have thought he was speaking about the Premier of Newfoundland. I have not heard the Premier of Saskatchewan condemned in such a blatant way for a long time—in fact, ever.

Mr. Benjamin: I do it every day.

Mr. Otto: The issue here does not relate to industry in Saskatchewan, be it the mining industry, the forest industry, the potash industry, or whatever it may be. The issue is whether the government should make public correspondence, research or studies passing between the United States government and the government of Canada. I realize we have participatory democracy, but there is a limit even to participatory democracy. If this motion were carried and production of these papers ordered, it would mean that hon. gentlemen opposite would have the right to decide whether the government acted or did not act in a certain set of circumstances. If the House were doing this on every issue and in respect of every bit of correspondence—

[Mr. Benjamin.]

● (5:50 p.m.)

Mr. Benjamin: They have already done it.

Mr. Otto: As the hon. gentleman said, they have already done it. The opportunity exists. The estimates are before the House and the committees and at any time hon. gentlemen opposite are welcome to point out to a minister that he has not exercised his proper, judicial function or that he has not made the correct decision. I have done this myself on many occasions.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. In order that we may not become involved in difficulties later, I wonder whether it might be understood that if my hon. friend from York East (Mr. Otto) is interrupted by a certain knock on the door, this motion could retain its position on the list of motions for papers.

Mr. Forest: That is the agreement.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Is it so agreed?

Mr. Otto: It is so agreed. I believe the knock has already come. This is the shortest speech I have ever made.

THE ROYAL ASSENT

A message was delivered by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Mr. Speaker, the Right Honourable the Deputy Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

● (6:00 p.m.)

And being returned:

Mr. Speaker informed the House that His Excellency the Deputy Governor General had been pleased to give, in Her Majesty's name, the royal assent to the following bills:

An act respecting Brunner Corporation (Canada) Limited

An act to amend the Criminal Code

An act respecting the expropriation of land

An act to incorporate National Farmers Union

An act to amend the Oil and Gas Production and Conservation Act

An act to provide for the relief of persons who have been convicted of offences and have subsequently rehabilitated themselves

An act to amend the Supreme Court Act

An act to amend the Industrial Research and Development Incentives Act