

Supply

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

Mr. Korchinski: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege regarding questions that have been raised in the House and notice has been taken of them or ministers have promised to take them under advisement and bring forward answers. I raised a question on February 1 with the Minister of National Revenue, and several other questions have been taken as notice by parliamentary secretaries. Your Honour will appreciate that many members cannot get the recognition they would like in order to ask a question. Difficult as this is, it is doubly difficult to raise the same question again. I wonder if it might not be a solution that when ministers rise to reply to a question they take advantage of the opportunity to reply to other questions raised previously.

Mr. Speaker: The point raised by the hon. member for Mackenzie is of interest but objection has been taken to this procedure on the ground that it complicates matters. I would think it does. If a minister rises on a first question, gives a reply and then before a supplementary can be asked replies to a question asked on an earlier day, it does confuse things somewhat. I understand the difficulty the hon. member has raised and perhaps some day he might be inspired to find a solution to this ticklish and difficult problem. Orders of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SUPPLY

APPROPRIATION ACT No. 1, 1973

The House resumed from Tuesday, February 13, consideration in committee of Bill C-141, for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service for the financial year ending 31st March, 1973—Mr. MacEachen (for Mr. Drury)—Mr. McCleave in the chair.

On clause 2—*Schedule*.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Chairman, I can always expect a good deal of assistance, whenever I speak, from those around me who are masquerading as my friends. I had just launched into my remarks last night when someone pointed out that it was ten o'clock, so I am very pleased to be able to continue today and I am extremely pleased to see the Minister of Agriculture here.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rose: To have the minister of the department concerned present in full and living colour when one is making a speech is appreciated by all members. We are always grateful for that courtesy.

Mr. Chairman, I should like to cover three main points in my remarks this afternoon. First is the lack of tariff protection and customs protection accorded to horticultural and vegetable crops in the area of British Columbia that I represent. Second, and I am sorry that the Minister of National Revenue is not in the chamber, is what I

[Mr. Davis.]

consider to be the inequities of taxation. Third is what I regard as the persecution and harassment of certain part-time farmers in my riding.

In British Columbia, agriculture has a tremendous impact on the economy even in comparison with other provinces. When we hear the word "wheat" mentioned in this House about 25 members jump to their feet. I am not quite in the position that the right hon. member for Prince Albert suggested, to the extent that I believe wheat grows on trees, but we have had a good deal of discussion of wheat around this House of Commons over the last few years and members from what I call prairie Canada, as opposed to western Canada, have had a lot of exposure here. Nevertheless, the agricultural industry in British Columbia represents approximately \$250 million a year to the economy, so it is not a minor industry.

There are great pressures on that industry and I think it is fair to say that it has been declining, as it has throughout Canada. One of the reasons for this is that we have traded off agricultural protection in order to get some other kind of advantage with the Americans and our other trading partners in world markets. In my riding there is great pressure by subdividers because of the limited amount of land available. There is an urban intrusion into our farmland.

• (1550)

Between 2 per cent and 4 per cent of the land in British Columbia is suitable for agriculture. Most of this land is in the Fraser Valley. The Fraser Valley happens to be close to the large megapolis known as Vancouver, and the growth of Vancouver has tended to funnel up the Fraser Valley. That expansion has been assisted by a great many transport arteries, bridges and by business and domestic expansions as well as subdivisions which have appeared in the area.

As there is so little land in British Columbia that can be devoted to any kind of farming, and as there is strong pressure to sell such land because of increased land values which have been created because of subdivisions springing up, farmland has tended to disappear. There has been an encouraging response recently by the government of British Columbia. It has imposed a temporary freeze on all farmland until certain legislation can be enacted and we can know in which direction we are going.

I do not think our greatest problem is our proximity to the city. Actually, the problem that faces all agriculturalists throughout Canada is that stemming from a lack of adequate return for agricultural enterprise.

Mr. Whelan: I agree.

Mr. Rose: The minister agrees with me. He said that last night.

Mr. Whelan: I wondered when the hon. member was coming to that part.

Mr. Rose: The minister wondered when I was coming to that part of my speech. The minister said that the government does not intend to allow a smart operator to bring in cheap products in order to make a fast buck, with the consumer not getting any benefit. I am sure the minister