

have gained a market at the expense of the farmer. The farmer's cost of production will not be covered. The government felt it was a good opportunity to introduce this legislation. They do not have to live with the facts. At the same time they will be saving \$60 million or \$70 million which they would normally pay out under the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act.

I had not intended to speak very long and there are still a few more points I would like to cover. I have taken longer than I thought. I want to register some of the doubts that I have. I hope the minister and the press will not state that protein grading is here from now on and that the farmers will be on easy street; this is what happened after the wheat sale to China. It will take two years to implement this system. There will be far more problems than we realize at present. Suggestions have been made from this side of the House. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) indicated that we would have been ready to pass the protein grading bill but that we had some reservations about certain aspects of it. Although I still have some reservations, I am prepared at this time to allow the matter to come to a final vote.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.

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● (9:50 p.m.)

STATISTICS ACT

ESTABLISHMENT OF STATISTICS CANADA, PROVISIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION, ETC.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce) moved that Bill S-2, respecting statistics of Canada, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs.

Mr. Bruce Howard (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I should like to take this opportunity to say a few words concerning Bill S-2. We are proposing to make a number of changes in the existing legislation which governs the operations of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Not long ago I picked up a piece of advertising material which informed me that our old friend the Volkswagen was to have a "nose job" and that a number of changes were to be made under the hood. The advertisement went on to say that the important changes were those under the hood. We propose making a change in the appearance of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, a vehicle which has served us well over the years but the important changes are the ones which will go on, as it were, under the hood.

Statistics Act

Before we begin consideration of the bill before us I think it might be interesting to recall a little history. The first census taken in Canada was as early as 1666 when Jean Talon, the intendant, went to work to determine how many people there were in the colony. But real business of gathering statistics in Canada began in earnest in 1918. At that time the government set up a commission to examine the methods used in gathering statistics. The commission reported, and a statistics act was passed in the same year endorsing the commission's proposal for a central statistical office to co-ordinate statistics. It then became the job of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics to collect statistics, the responsibility for which had previously been scattered among various government departments. Later, in 1948, because of the numerous changes in the interval a new and revised Statistics Act was passed. It is this act we seek to amend today.

Since that time, Mr. Speaker, the nature of the demand has changed considerably. Both the provincial and federal governments have expanded their social and economic policies. New departments and agencies have been created. Task forces and royal commissions, coupled with expanding universities and independent research bodies, have led to an increased sophistication of business and market research. There has been an explosion in the demand for statistics by these organizations. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics has responded wherever possible to this demand for accurate co-ordinated facts. It has become a service institution with a high reputation. But service institutions, like cars or television sets, have to be remodelled from time to time to keep them up-to-date. The new concepts contained in the bill before us will make it easier for Canadian business and social institutions to supply the facts the bureau needs, faster and more efficiently than in the past. That is what the new act is all about.

Canadians and their governments have mutual obligations in relation to statistical needs. The citizen, of course, has an obligation to provide statistical data to the nation, but the state has an obligation too—to make it as easy as possible for the citizen to do so, and it is in this regard that there is real room for improvement on the part of governments. Why, for example, should the citizen fill out one form for the federal government and another form to give similar information to a province? We ought to be able to do better than that, and we can do better.

In the past, informal practices have developed between federal and provincial statistical agencies toward that end. The new act formalizes existing ad hoc arrangements and adds a new area of co-operation between these two levels of government. Canadians will be able to fulfil many of their reporting obligations by filling in one form for both governments. The saving in paperwork will permit the modernization of statistical services and provide more and better service without increasing the cost.

Perhaps I can call it ten o'clock, and proceed later, Mr. Speaker?