

*Two-Price Wheat Act*

through the Parliament of Canada, to subsidize the consumer. The decision should not be reached automatically by way of a statutory act that subsidization should take place by forcing the farm producer to put his products on the market at a price below its value.

What this bill will do is to force us into the situation where we must put on the shelf cheaper food than what you could sell in the international market place, allowing Canadian consumers to purchase it more cheaply than they would normally be able to do, rather than the government taking that responsibility which is naturally theirs.

● (1540)

If we take a look at some of the increased expenses of the farm community, we note that the borrowing debt of farmers has almost doubled during the past six years. It has risen from \$8.5 billion to the present situation where there is an increase of another \$4.3 billion on top of that. Also it is worth while noting that out of every dollar spent by consumers only 38 cents go to the actual production of food or the farmer himself. The budget of the federal Department of Agriculture totals some \$673 million, which is less than 2 per cent of total government expenditures. The one thing every Canadian does is eat three times a day, generally. What I have just said underscores the low priority given to agriculture and an agricultural commitment.

With a two-price wheat system, it is important to note that the obligation of the government is simply and absolutely to make an amendment to this bill of a nature to guarantee that, as the world market increases, the upper level remains flexible to the extent that farmers are not locked into the present system which I find unacceptable. As the hon. member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Schellenberger) so ably stated earlier in this debate, August 1, 1980, will be the date of the application of Bill S-6, which means in effect that farmers will have been without a program throughout the past year.

Even if total food costs have risen higher than other sectors of the economy, Canadians are spending less of their disposable income on food dollars than any other country in the world, including the United States. Canadians are spending approximately 17.5 cents of their disposable income for food dollars. In the United Kingdom it is 29.3 cents; in Ireland 32.6 cents; in Austria 28.6 cents; in Sweden 27 cents; and in France 23.4 cents.

In terms of the amount of disposable income which Canadians spend on food, and the fact that it is down to 17.5 cents out of every dollar, this means that we cannot listen to the hue and cry of consumers who say that farmers and producers should subsidize it. Rather, we must look at the data and recognize that on the world picture there is no nation, including the United States, that puts food on kitchen tables as cheaply as Canada. Surely that cheapness ought not to be the obligation of farmers. It must be public policy, for whatever reasons the government deems. Then it becomes incumbent upon all taxpayers to see that that policy is in place, and not one particular sector such as farm producers. I think Canadi-

ans have a respect for the value of farmers and their production, in view of the fact that they bring in the highest amount of capital which eases the balance of payments more than any other industry in Canada. Certainly it is of great importance that the agricultural community is the largest employer of any community in the country.

I see Mr. Speaker is indicating that it is about time for me to wind up the great address I am giving this afternoon. I had only a few moments notice to get ready for this; I did not know that it was to be brought on. It being 4.45 o'clock, I should like to take the opportunity to move to adjourn the debate today.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** The hon. member is quite correct in all respects except for his reference to the time. It is only 3.45. Earlier it was suggested by the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) that at this time the debate on Bill S-6 be adjourned and the House would proceed to the consideration of Bill S-4.

Before we proceed with the hon. member's motion, I should like to indicate to the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Malone) that he retains his right to continue this debate when Bill S-6 next comes before the House for consideration.

Is it the pleasure to adopt the motion to adjourn the debate?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

Motion agreed to and debate adjourned.

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## DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR ACT

### REMOVAL OF REQUIREMENT TO PUBLISH "LABOUR GAZETTE"

**Hon. Francis Fox (for the Minister of Labour)** moved that Bill S-4, to amend the Department of Labour Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Mr. Knowles:** No!

**Mr. D. M. Collenette (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I sincerely thank hon. members on all sides for their co-operation this afternoon. Since we have been so diligent in our work, as I mentioned earlier, we have been scurrying around for other work to do so that we do not waste any time. I understand there is a disposition on all sides to allow this bill to go to committee at four o'clock.

I rise to speak on second reading of this bill to amend the Department of Labour Act of 1900. I am sure the large majority of hon. members are familiar with the objective of this amendment. I am very sorry the Minister of Labour (Mr. Regan) or his parliamentary secretary could not be here this