

S. O. 21

earlier today, to a very large degree the integrity of our reputation in international grain markets is directly a result of the activities of the Canadian Grain Commission. We certainly want to reaffirm our commitment to the commission and to the quality of product which it ensures is made available for sale throughout the world by the Canadian Wheat Board. Those high quality standards in the regulation of the grain handling system are an integral part of our entire marketing process. The well-being of Canadian agriculture depends on the success of this committee.

I would like to address briefly the issue of the length of service which Canadian Grain Commission members will provide as a result of these amendments because that is of some concern to Hon. Members in the Opposition. At one time we in this country, as in most other democracies, used to have a civil service which was largely, perhaps even essentially, politicized. One of the reasons for that was the fact that all members of the civil service were appointed at the pleasure of the Minister and, consequently, were subject to dismissal by a Minister at any give time.

Canadian legislators who came before us very wisely decided to reform that system. One of the ways in which they did it was by ensuring that those who had appointments in the Public Service were guaranteed the opportunity to function free of political interference. We moved toward a non-politicized civil service by moving in the direction of permanent appointments. That was an important and necessary direction which was established some time ago.

In my opinion, the proposed amendments which will give assistant grain commissioners and commissioners a specific term of office is a step in that same direction. We are hereby ensuring that those individuals will be free to act irrespective of even the displeasure of their superiors. They will be free to do what is necessary to maintain the integrity of the Canadian grain industry. I believe that these proposed amendments are very much in the continuing tradition of a non-politicized Public Service and I believe they have the good support of the industry throughout the country.

● (1230)

We are striving to make the Canada Grain Act more efficient. These amendments essentially involve two categories: to improve the administration of the Act and to provide for more flexibility in grading and in standards.

The first category of amendments improve the administration of the Canada Grain Act by including amendments that adapt to new grain handling and information processing techniques.

There are also amendments which define the specific terms for those who hold the important offices provided for in the Act.

The second category of amendments provide for more flexibility in developing grades and grade standards. For

example, in the future the commission will be able to package and certify specific types of grain according to what buyers want. It is a changing market and something we have discovered is that the grains standards and labelling we have employed in the past are not necessarily totally consistent with what buyers in different parts of the world are seeking today.

We believe that the new flexibility provided for by these amendments will permit us to tap into new markets. That is extremely important in a very competitive international market.

The third category of amendments are those which clarify the financial protection operative of the Canada Grain Act. They were dealt with before in the committee.

The Canadian Grain Commission has helped Canada maintain a very solid reputation as a reliable supplier of high quality grain and grain products. The amendments we are proposing today will make it easier for the commission to operate. We think that is good news for all those who are dependent on the Canadian grain industry.

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

Some Hon. Members: Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I believe there is unanimous consent to call it one o'clock?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being one o'clock, I do now leave the Chair until two o'clock this day.

At 12.33 p.m., the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 21

[English]

TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—CALL FOR GENERAL ELECTION

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, this morning the National Action Committee on the Status of Women said that the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement is like an iceberg. There is much more