

Canadian Wheat Board Act

fell swoop. It has been revealed that this was too large a reduction. The result was lost income that will never be recovered by the producers of barley.

In its four-pronged attack on western Canadian agriculture, one prong being the stabilization bill, C-244, we find that the government is withdrawing financial support for western agriculture and, as in this bill, substituting straight control of the industry. I suggest, Mr. Speaker that this is not the right way to approach the problems of western agriculture. Since the minister has said that this legislation is not urgent and he does not know when, if ever, rapeseed will be brought under the jurisdiction of the Wheat Board even if the bill is passed, I think the producers of rapeseed ought to be consulted.

The hon. member for Mackenzie and the hon. member for Vegreville also support this view. I agree that not all permit holders under the Canadian Wheat Board should take part in that consultation. Only those who, as the hon. member for Mackenzie suggested, have taken an interest in the crop by growing it should be consulted. I feel that everybody who has taken the trouble to grow this crop ought to be consulted. A plebiscite should be held in that way.

Since the legislation is not urgent at this time, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington (Mr. Alkenbrack):

That all the words after "That" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

Bill C-238 be not now read a second time but that the subject matter of the bill be referred to the Canadian Wheat Board to determine by way of producer plebiscite whether the provisions of the Canadian Wheat Board Act that may by regulation apply to oats or barley should be extended to include rye, flax seed or rapeseed or any or all of them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Chair must consider the procedural acceptability of the motion moved by the hon. member for Palliser (Mr. Schumacher), seconded by the hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington (Mr. Alkenbrack). I must say to hon. members that I have some doubt as to whether the Chair can accept the amendment from a procedural standpoint. I have two preliminary doubts. The hon. member wishes to refer the matter to an outside agency. I think there is probably some jurisprudence to indicate that he cannot do that. He can refer the subject matter to a standing committee, but whether he can refer it to an agency that is outside Parliament is a matter, I think, that must be considered. I am aware that there is a precedent with respect to the transport commission. Hon. members may wish to assist the Chair on that point.

The other point that occurs to the Chair initially—and I invite the assistance of hon. members in this respect—is that the motion does not seem to oppose the principle of the bill. It refers to an outside agency, without opposing the principle of the bill. The Chair's mind is open to argument on the matter. If hon. members wish to assist the Chair, I will be pleased to hear them.

Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, I believe it was the thought of the mover and seconder of this motion that they were assisting the

[Mr. Schumacher.]

minister in his endeavour to get the bill through the House. I am sure that we want to accommodate the assistant whip of the government party rather than be accused of filibustering. We felt that this was a reasoned amendment which would help the minister to give the people of this country what he has been promising. We accept the bill. Every speaker on this side of the House has said that, with one exception.

• (9:40 p.m.)

We do not think this amendment takes anything away from the bill. It does not in any way deter the minister from getting the bill through. The minister said that the subject of including rapeseed, flax and rye under the Wheat Board will not be used immediately—in fact, not as long as he is minister.

The minister seemed to accept the principle that a referendum should be called. We made suggestions with regard to a referendum. We suggested that only those who produced rapeseed be asked whether they are in favour of having rapeseed included in the bill. Therefore, we say it is a reasoned amendment. As the assistant whip has suggested time and again, the purpose is to get this legislation through the House as fast as possible for the benefit of the farmers. The minister is very anxious to get the grading part of the bill passed. We approve of that; every speaker has said so.

To cite a precedent I wish to refer to page 400 of Beauchesne's. This refers to a similar amendment. I will only read part of it:

"That all the words after the word 'That' in the said motion be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

'the further consideration of this bill be referred until the principle thereof has, by means of a referendum, been submitted to and approved of by the electors of Canada.'"

In the case of this amendment, rather than the electors of Canada it is the people who are concerned with this particular grain. I do not want to go into the arguments why it should or should not be placed under the control of the Wheat Board. The minister said it is not immediately necessary to have this provision, and we agree.

If the referendum indicates that the rapeseed producers want this grain under the control of the Wheat Board, as the Socialists to my left would like it, we will agree to it. We know that they do not all want this because we have had communications from a large number of rapeseed producers indicating that they do not want to be included in the legislation. It is the only cash crop they have at the present time. This is what we in western Canada are concerned about, a cash crop at the present time.

I could state what we think about the efforts of the Wheat Board in selling wheat at this time. The minister said there is a record movement of grain under the Canadian Wheat Board. In spite of that, the economy of western Canada is at its lowest ebb ever. There is something wrong. This is what we are concerned about. Rapeseed is the biggest cash crop they have. It is the only thing that is keeping them going. That is why I say this is a reasoned amendment. There should be no hesitation