

Government Orders

A series of recent events, culminating in an announcement late yesterday of a drop in the initial payment of wheat and barley prices that are guaranteed by the government of Canada through the Canadian Wheat Board, have brought this matter to a head.

Recently, the government announced increases to Farm Credit Corporation loan rates, bringing them to levels above the Bank of Canada prime, which is unprecedented in the history of the Farm Credit Corporation.

The billion dollar aid program which the government said was required to help offset the effects of the international grain war is still pending.

The Economic Council of Canada recently predicted that farm income across the Prairies will drop significantly, by as much as 87 per cent in some regions.

As well, the Farm Debt Review Board recently reported that more than one-third of western farmers are in a severe financial crisis. A high percentage of these will be unable to obtain the necessary funds to plant their crops without government assistance. The fact is that seeding has now actually begun in some regions.

I submit that a debate is necessary to bring to the government's attention the need for its intervention and support. I request that this House adjourn to debate the crisis facing Canadian farmers.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: I want to thank the hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre for giving me notice. I hope other members will take notice of my comments that the hon. member has put his case succinctly and without delving into argument and debate. That is appreciated by the Chair.

I have given this very careful consideration. It is a matter of very great concern, I am sure, all across the country, but especially to our farming communities. While it is a serious problem, I do not think it is appropriate at this time to adjourn the business of the day to go ahead with an emergency debate. That does not mean that the situation might not warrant a debate at some point, but not for today.

I also point out to hon. members and to the public that the hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre and

others have been very diligent in their representations on behalf of their constituents in this Chamber on this matter. I am sure that they will continue to be as diligent as they have been.

As I say, not today, but we will watch events.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

DEPARTMENT OF MULTICULTURALISM AND
CITIZENSHIP ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House proceeded to consider Bill C-18, an Act to establish the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship and to amend certain Acts in relation thereto, as reported with amendments by a legislative committee.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: There are five motions in amendment on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill C-18, an Act to establish the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship and to amend certain Acts in relation thereto.

[English]

The first motion in the name of the hon. member for Vancouver East, although causing the Chair some procedural difficulty because it seeks to add a definition to a bill which contained none when the bill received second reading in this House, will be given the benefit of the doubt, will be allowed, and I can say to the hon. member that it will be debated and voted on separately.

Motions Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5 are all out of order and as a consequence will not be received.

[Translation]

Motion No. 2 by the hon. member for Vancouver East is out of order because it introduces a new concept into the bill by making it mandatory for the minister to "activate" departmental multicultural policies. This is contrary to our practice as will be found in Beauchesne's 5th edition, citation 773, subsection (1).