

Supply

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SUPPLY

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (A), 1972-73

The House resumed consideration in committee of Bill C-141, for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service for the financial year ending 31st March, 1973—Mr. MacEachen (for Mr. Drury)—Mr. McCleave in the chair.

On clause 2—*Schedule*.

The Chairman: Order, please. It being six o'clock, I do now leave the chair. The committee will resume at eight o'clock.

At six o'clock, the committee took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The committee resumed at 8 p.m.

The Chairman: Order, please. When the committee rose at six o'clock we were considering the schedule, particularly votes 15a and 40a relating to the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Gleave: Mr. Chairman, I rise to touch on two or three points that were raised by the Minister of Justice, who is responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, and by one or two members on the benches to my right. When I spoke previously on these estimates I made the point that due to the inequities and inefficiencies which existed in respect of the marketing of rapeseed, it would be advisable to bring this grain within the marketing operations of the Canadian Wheat Board.

The minister in charge of the Wheat Board told us he had said they would be ready to reconsider that matter, and that he was in favour of it. However, he said it would be fine except that he did not want to be like those nasty people in the province of Saskatchewan who moved boldly ahead in the field of marketing but, rather, he would be with those who chose to hold a plebescite and give the producers a choice.

I cannot quarrel with him on that sort of approach. As a matter of fact, in the last parliament, the twenty-eighth parliament, I moved a motion to have the Canadian Wheat Board Act do that very thing. I shall not read the motion to the committee, but I am sure the hon. member for Saskatoon-Humboldt remembers that in it I said the possibility of holding a plebescite should be put before the rapeseed farmers of the three western provinces. The minister in charge of the Wheat Board and his colleagues voted against that motion; they voted against the possibility of allowing the farmers a real choice.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

I listened this afternoon to the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley. He said they had been asked what their position was, and it was that they would like the farmer to have a choice; they should have a plebescite and vote on the matter. If that is so, I ask why his colleagues in the twenty-eighth parliament did not vote to give the farmers a choice: that is all I asked in this House on behalf of the rapeseed growers of the three western provinces, that they be given the opportunity to make their choice.

The minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board knows that. It may be that the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley does not know it, but his colleagues know it. The hon. member for Lisgar knows it. The hon. member for Lisgar is an honest man and he will admit that I moved that motion in the House. I do not propose to be flim-flammed and bamboozled in this House; I do not propose to put up with just shadows.

Let us be honest with one another and look at the situation and deal with it. When farmers have to haul their rapeseed 50 miles or 60 miles to get it into an elevator in my constituency so they can obtain the Vancouver price of another 25 cents, 30 cents or 40 cents a bushel—and it is that much—such an effort and exercise is unacceptable to me. When they have to sit in their trucks in front of an elevator in North Battleford because they have signed a contract, rather than getting the current market price, it is unacceptable to me. These people are very careful with the farmers. There was a famous man in Saskatchewan by the name of Charles Dunning at the time when the farmers were trying to form the Saskatchewan wheat pool. The farmers were out in the country persuading people to sign wheat pool contracts, and he said, "Oh, for God's sake be careful and read the small print in the contract".

• (2010)

There are ways of doing things and there are ways of not doing things. When I read the statement made by the minister when he argued about the Conservatives having promised 30 cents in the last election, my wish was to correct the record, because to be quite fair and to do justice to the Conservatives I must point out that the minister was in error. I think the Conservatives were promising 25 cents a bushel for wheat.

I agree that when we argue about who sold the most wheat and who made the biggest sale, it is difficult to get excited about it.

Mr. Rose: Yes, get excited.

Mr. Gleave: With friends like this, Mr. Chairman, I do not know who needs enemies. I want to put these ideas before the House, to keep the record straight and to keep us on the road regarding what we are really going to do on behalf of the grain farmer to enable him to stay in business, make a living and contribute to the welfare of this country.

I want to say something else to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board. I notice in press reports that it is probable that within this year we will start negotiations under GATT to obtain new agreements and trading arrangements for the sale of our grains in the markets of the world. I point out to the minister that the last time we