

*Agricultural Stabilization Act*

is quite clear that the powers of the minister can be exercised if he sees fit. I remind the House that notwithstanding the popularity of the Minister of Agriculture at the present time and his strength in the Liberal Party, he will not be Minister of Agriculture forever and a day. Having said that, as a safeguard I think this particular provision of the bill should be eliminated. If the minister does not really intend to use these powers to their full extent, then surely there is not much point in their being in the bill.

I notice that the minister of agriculture of the province of Ontario also expressed some reservations about these tremendous powers given the minister and about the fact that there are no provisions eliminating toploading. While I am sure we appreciate the minister's sincerity and his approach to agriculture, I think this bill is vague in many respects. This particular provision provides far too much cabinet discretion. I think it gives the federal authorities the opportunity, indeed the mandate, to manipulate a commodity at will.

Certainly, I find no difficulty in supporting the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner), notwithstanding the assurances given by the Minister of Agriculture. As I say, if the minister is honest and sincere when he says these powers are not really needed, and that they will not be used in a dictatorial fashion—which is precisely what we on this side of the House are afraid of—then why not withdraw the powers? I think this piece of legislation could pass all stages quite easily today if the minister agreed to do that.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the nays have it.

**Mr. Baldwin:** On division.

Motion No. 4 (Mr. Horner) negatived.

**Mr. Whelan** moved that the bill as reported be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** When shall the bill be read the third time?

**Some hon. Members:** Now.

**Mr. Baldwin:** Next sitting of the House.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Next sitting of the House.

[Mr. Mazankowski.]

**Mr. Reid:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether there might be consent to take the report stage of Bill C-62 which was reported back today.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. members have heard the suggestion of the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Reid). Does the House consent to proceed to the consideration of Bill C-62 which was reported today?

**Mr. Baldwin:** Mr. Speaker, we would have no objection. I wonder if the parliamentary secretary or the minister can advise whether amendments were made to the bill in committee. If not, there will be no need for a reprint. I see the minister shaking his head, so I assume there are no amendments.

**Mr. Reid:** That is right.

**Mr. Baldwin:** Then we will see the bill in its original, pristine, pure form.

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**OLD AGE SECURITY ACT****AMENDMENT TO PROVIDE FOR PAYMENT OF SPOUSE'S ALLOWANCE TO PERSONS SIXTY TO SIXTY-FOUR**

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare)** moved that Bill C-62, to amend the Old Age Security Act, to repeal the Old Age Assistance Act and to amend other acts in consequence thereof, as reported (without amendment) from the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** When shall the bill be read the third time. By leave, now?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Lalonde** moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

**Mr. Baldwin:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the minister is going to make a speech explaining some of the defects which those of us on this side of the House pointed out to him on second reading.

● (1630)

[Translation]

**Mr. Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank the House for having accepted to consider this bill today even if it was only reported this afternoon. The bill has been thoroughly and carefully discussed during two sittings of the committee. As stated by the member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), some comments have been made on the possibility of extending the scope of the bill.

As I said on second reading and also before the committee, the purpose of that bill is quite specific and is meant to cope with a rather difficult condition at the present time, that is—the case of spouses one of whom is pensioned and the other aged between 60 and 65 years of age is needy. Indeed, at the present time, under such circum-