

Government Orders

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I do not particularly wish to reply to the member. It is more in relationship to the comments you made after I had spoken. I just want to make one comment on your comments when you indicated that you wanted to consider the procedural aspects.

I want to say to you, Sir, that we as a government would welcome any ruling which would suggest that any motions to be placed on the Order Paper would not be placed there in any case by surprise, that there would always be adequate notice. We on this side would be more than happy to accept that principle, if that is the principle the opposition is arguing for. Certainly that is what I hear them arguing for.

Mr. Speaker: I think I have heard enough argument. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary, of course with some skill, put forward a proposition which is not altogether beyond the ken of the Speaker. I am quite aware that depending on the day it may suit one or another in this chamber to have things very clearly set out before a committee meets. However, I think I do have the procedural point. I think I also have the point of the Parliamentary Secretary. I shall be very careful before I wander too far down that path.

Just so that the public who, after all, has been listening to this, understands exactly what it is we are doing here, an application has been made on a question of privilege because the item for discussion that was set out on the notice to committee members was not the item that was dealt with.

The second matter that has been raised in the discussion is whether or not the head of Canada Post can ever appear in front of the committee. It has been, I think, made quite clear from the government side that whatever happened at the committee does not preclude that particular gentleman from coming before the committee. I think I have taken the Parliamentary Secretary's words appropriately. I do not want members to think that what has happened is that the head of Canada Post will never appear before the committee.

Mr. Boudria: We never said that.

Mr. Speaker: I think we have some assurance from the government side that the government does not intend to take a position that the chairman of Canada Post not appear before the committee. Even though that may not

be the procedural matter we are discussing in this discussion, as far as it has gone, it is in the public interest to know what the government's position is on that particular point. I see the parliamentary secretary nodding that I have interpreted it correctly.

The point that I have to decide, and which I am going to look at, is a very interesting and intriguing one. The hon. member for Burin—St. George's put it clearly in summation, and the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier and the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell have argued the point. I will look at it carefully. The hon. parliamentary secretary, of course, has also put some of the implications of that argument to the House, and I will consider that.

I thank hon. members for their interventions.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

ADVANCE PAYMENTS FOR CROPS ACT**MEASURE TO AMEND**

The House resumed from October 5, 1989, consideration of the motion of Mr. Mazankowski that Bill C-36, an act to amend the Advance Payments for Crops Act and the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee; and the amendment of Mr. Foster (p. 4314).

Mr. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan): Mr. Speaker, as the member of Parliament for Cardigan and as a farmer who has benefited from the advance payments program, I welcome this opportunity to address the House on Bill C-36, an Act to amend the Advance Payments for Crops Act.

Since the onset of this thirty-first Parliament we have watched this government whittle away at agricultural programs, programs which Canadian farmers have been privileged to use.

The advance payments program is another in a long list of Tory cut-backs in agriculture. The assault continues and will force many farmers off their farms. This government has no compassion or sensitivity when it comes to axing agricultural programs.