

Vehicular Parts

Canada or sent or conveyed from one province to another be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this bill, numbered Bill C-103 and cited as the Motor Vehicle and Farm Implements Act appears in my name because I feel there is a problem in this country in obtaining parts for motor vehicles and farm implements. Essentially, this is a simple bill whose main purpose is to make certain that anyone who buys a motor vehicle or farm implement which is manufactured in Canada and conveyed from one province to another, or anyone who buys a motor vehicle or farm tractor which is imported into Canada, shall be guaranteed a supply of parts for a period of ten years. As a result, farm tractors in particular, will not remain idle while the farmer loses money and waits an indeterminable length of time for a part to arrive from abroad. The owner would be able to approach his dealer with confidence and obtain the necessary parts in short order.

Very briefly, Mr. Speaker, this bill provides for the Governor-in-Council to make regulations prescribing that a supply of parts for farm implements and motor vehicles covered by the Act shall be guaranteed for a period of ten years from the date of sale to the user thereof. It also provides that no manufacturer or distributor shall send or convey, or deliver for the purpose of sending or conveying from one province to another a farm implement or a motor vehicle manufactured in Canada unless he complies with the regulations under section three of the Act. It also stipulates that any manufacturer or distributor who violates the act is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000.

I bring this matter to the attention of the House because of a number of situations which have arisen in the area of Saskatchewan that I represent. I am sure similar instances have occurred many times in other parts of Canada. In one instance a farmer was busily combining when a major part broke on his combine. He contacted the local dealer. The dealer did not have the part available and phoned warehouses in the province only to find that parts were not in stock and that the only place where one could be located was Calgary. The distance from the farmer's place to Calgary was 420 miles. He and his son set out on an all-night drive to Calgary, picked up the part and were combining again 24 hours later. They had been put to considerable inconvenience and expense and it would obviously have been far better had the part been available in Saskatoon, Regina or some other major centre in Saskatchewan. After all, we are the leading agricultural province in Canada.

Another farmer was compelled to keep his tractor out of commission for about six months because he could not get a simple repair carried out. When this farmer wrote to me I notified the Agricultural Implements Board in Saskatchewan and the Board was able to see to it that the farmer got his repair work done. In this case there was probably a breakdown in communication between the farmer and his dealer.

Another farmer purchased a tractor. He ordered a belt pulley as an extra. He had to wait for eight months before he finally got his pulley. One of the problems arose as a result of a discrepancy in the company's records. The

[Mr. Nesdoly.]

inventory indicated a substantial supply of pulleys on hand, but they had somehow disappeared. Possibly a computer was at fault. Eventually the factory was convinced and a further supply was shipped. The farmer finally obtained his pulley, but not before there had been a long delay. I could give other examples of extreme difficulty encountered by farmers in getting repairs done for their tractors and farm implements. The same applies to farm trucks, snowmobiles or powered toboggans and automobiles. I, personally, had to wait several months for repairs to be carried out to an automobile I owned. It is frequently very difficult to obtain spare parts for farm vehicles or other vehicles, when they are more than six or eight years old. It seems to me as though many companies are pursuing a policy of deliberate obsolescence. They are not interested in a vehicle after it has been in service for seven or eight years.

The constitution is not clear as to whether this whole question of repairs to machinery and motor vehicles is the responsibility of the provincial governments or of the federal government. Many of the provincial governments are doing good work in this field. However, I feel that the federal government cannot shirk its responsibility, especially when the farm implements or motor vehicles concerned cross provincial or international boundaries. At this time, four provinces in Canada have enacted laws which deal with the whole question of farm repairs and farm machinery. I have no knowledge of laws dealing with automobiles and powered toboggans. These provinces are Alberta, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan. It is possible my information may be somewhat out-dated on this point—I got it from the report of the Barber Royal Commission on Farm Machinery. Essentially, the purpose of the acts in those provinces is to protect the farmer in his relations with suppliers of farm machinery. The Barber Royal Commission recommended that all provinces review the legislation passed by the four provinces in this field and consider whether they should not introduce legislation of their own, if they had not already done so.

I shall review very briefly the legislation passed by some of the provinces. In Saskatchewan, the Agricultural Implements Act was passed in 1968 and amendments were added up to, and including, 1973. The act sets up an Agricultural Implements Board and one of its functions under section 6(C) (b) is as follows:

To take such action as may be necessary to reduce or correct unreasonable delays in the delivery of repairs, and unreasonable charges for them, and to recommend to the minister appropriate action to alleviate such problems.

Section 6(D) (1) stipulates:

A farmer who feels himself aggrieved or who considers he has incurred a loss due to an unreasonable delay in the availability of a repair or who considers he has incurred a loss due to the vendor or the general provincial distributor not fulfilling the conditions or warranties as set out in a conditional sales contract . . . may apply to the Board for an award of compensation for the damages or loss he has suffered.

Section 6(D) (2) states:

Upon receipt of an application under subsection (1) the Board may, subject to the regulations with respect to notice of the hearing to interested parties and the conduct of the hearing, dismiss the application or make compensation to the applicant farmer out of the Agricultural Implements Compensation Fund.