

Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Dauphin (Mr. Ritchie) referred to rapeseed as the cinderella crop of the western agricultural economy. Surely the foregoing quotation confirms his description. As we all know, this success has been achieved without recourse to any of the so-called steps the government has taken to improve the farmer's efficiency. I would urge the minister to reconsider this attack. I consider this legislation to be part of a concerted attack on the most healthy sector of our grain industry. We have never had to worry about quotas on rapeseed until this year, when somehow or other the farmers are having difficulty in the handling of rapeseed.

It has always been understood that because rapeseed did not come under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board, it was not subject to quotas and could be sold on the open market. We find that a futures market was maintained on the west coast until interrupted recently, probably largely at the instance of this government. In any event, I know several farmers in my constituency who have done quite well on rapeseed. They have entered into contracts, for example, with western Canadian seed processors at Lethbridge.

The regulations issued by the Canadian Wheat Board, so far as these farmers are concerned, did not appear to hamper practically unlimited sales to these oilseed companies. In one case I am thinking about, the farmer delivered 12 bushels per acre of his rapeseed crop to the Lethbridge receiving plant. He hauled it there with his own vehicle and therefore did not interrupt the railway situation or deprive other farmers of the ability to deliver their wheat by tying up boxcars. The quota book was left at the elevator. It appeared that he was able to deliver 12 bushels to the elevator when the quota conditions permitted such delivery. So he took that step. Much to his surprise, however, and to the surprise of the elevator agent, after he finished delivering the 12 bushels to the elevator the Wheat Board representative came around and picked up his quota book at the elevator and

he was without it for about three weeks. He had no prior notice that he had done anything wrong.

Since that time I have been in contact with the Canadian Wheat Board to determine under what authority they took such a step. To add insult to injury, this farmer was visited by a corporal of the RCMP and asked to make a statement. After he had had conversation with the RCMP corporal, the corporal said that he could not see how he had done anything wrong and that he did not know why he had been instructed to come to see him. In any event, I asked the Canadian Wheat Board under what authority they took this step and I have been awaiting an answer for over a month.

May I call it six o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

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MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate have passed Bill S-18, an Act to implement a Supplementary Income Tax Convention between Canada and Finland, to which the concurrence of this House is desired.

[*English*]

In following this debate, as a farmer myself I was greatly encouraged to see, either due to the eloquence of hon. members or due to the subject under discussion being agriculture, that the galleries had attracted, at least for 15 minutes, a very large number of distinguished ladies who seemed to be very much interested. I am very thankful for this diversion.

At six o'clock the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.