

Canada Co-operatives Association Bill

time. I know he does not now associate himself with that position.

Within these limits, the hon. member is perfectly right. It is just that aspect of programming that has raised itself as a difficulty and an impediment to some of the package which the government wanted to see introduced in the House of Commons in order to expedite the business of this chamber as well as the business of the Standing Committees.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The hour for the consideration of private members' business has expired.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

PUBLIC ORDER (TEMPORARY MEASURES) BILL—REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might have the leave of the House to deal with this matter. In the question period I stated it was the intention of the government to send the emergency powers bill to Committee of the Whole. No objection was taken at that time, but in order to clarify the situation I should like that to be made an order of the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed that this be made an order of the House?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It is so ordered.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

CANADA CO-OPERATIVES ASSOCIATION BILL

INCORPORATION, ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION, SHARE STRUCTURE, GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES, ETC.

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Basford that Bill C-177, respecting co-operative associations, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, when this debate was interrupted at five o'clock I was outlining some of the conditions in Canada that might be affected by the co-operative movement coming

[Mr. Jerome.]

under the umbrella of this new federal bill. I was going to mention the fact that nowadays we are greatly concerned about people in low-income groups, including people in our urban centres and native peoples, and about ways and means in which they can be helped to control their living conditions and their financial situation. We do not want these people to live in poverty and despair and to depend upon social allowance for their livelihood.

The Co-operative Union presented a brief to the Senate Committee on Poverty earlier this year, in which they pointed out the value of the co-operative movement to people in these groups. I know that in my own city of Vancouver—which is also the minister's city—there is among low-rent housing tenants in one project, at least, a co-operative buying club which is applying the co-operative principles. The tenants of the housing project are taking part in this co-operative endeavour, with very good results in reducing the cost of their groceries.

Also in this brief which was presented to the Committee on Poverty, the Co-operative Union of Canada mentioned the good co-operative work that is going on among the Eskimos, the Indians and the Métis. I do not intend to deal at any length with this matter, but I just wanted to mention the fact that co-operative associations will have an ever-increasing impact on our way of living in Canada. Their purpose is not merely to reduce the cost of consumer goods but also to help the people who are using the co-operatives to gain control of their own affairs.

There is one further aspect of this question that I would like to mention. We are greatly concerned today about the question of participation in the processes of democracy and how we can keep them alive and vigorous. I do not think we have begun to realize what the co-operative movement can do in that direction, what its nature is and how it can grow under this new bill which will deal with nationally incorporated co-operatives and ones that do business in more than one province. I do not think we have begun to realize the effect this can have on democratic processes and on furthering them in this country.

It would be far better to put this point in the knowledgeable language used by a leading member of a co-operative association. Some time ago an article was published by J. T. Phalen of the Co-operative Union of Canada. I want to read a couple of paragraphs of it, because he describes so well the way in which co-operatives can help to handle the question of the tight, monopoly control of industry and also the importance of the participation of people in our democratic government processes. The article reads in part as follows:

We insist on democracy in dealing with each other in political terms but we are slow to accept the fact that democracy in economic dealings also has validity and purpose.

The present trend toward greater and greater economic power in the hands of fewer and fewer people must certainly be a source of concern to all of us. Our neighbours to the south are now facing a situation where each of a number of giant American corporations controls more wealth than the United States government. A spokesman of one of these is reported to have said what is good for my corporation is good for the United States.