

*Government Orders*

world. It generally provides for the protection of the Canadian agricultural industry which is so important to the economy of the country.

We support this bill at third reading and want to see it ultimately implemented by the Government of Canada.

**Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak briefly on Bill C-67 to amend the Plant Quarantine Act so as to protect plant life in the agricultural and forestry sectors of the Canadian economy. This is a revision of old acts in an attempt to bring procedures up to date.

There are few questions that some observers may have about the bill. For instance, it grants the authority to operate an import permit system which is absolutely necessary if our country is to control the importation of pests with plants or with parts of plants, including diseases and fungi that might come in with seed.

Something that we will have to wait for and watch is whether this import permit system operated by Agriculture Canada will become noticeable. If and when we ever get to an import basis on American wheat under the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, External Affairs will take over the issuing of those permits for the granting of import licences.

However, we presume that Agriculture Canada will still be required to make certain that those imported seeds and grains are free of disease so that international trade does not override the need for the maintenance of a healthy lifestyle on both sides of the border of the trading countries. This will also keep available Canada's reputation as a country, which is relatively free of plant diseases and plant pests, to utilize in international trade for our own grain trade.

The changes to the act spell out some of the powers that the Department of Agriculture will have. It will be able to stop and enter conveyances whether vehicles, ships, or rail cars for purposes of enforcing the act and to make the inspections that are required to determine whether there are plant products on board and whether those plant products contain diseases or pests. It clarifies that the importer of all items governed by the act is responsible for presenting those items for inspection. It

sets out that there must be rooms and space made available for those inspections to take place.

It is quite a flexible act in that it covers a wide variety of plant material. Changes down the road can be reacted to, it is spelled out in the bill, by changes in regulations at that time. This is basically permissive legislation.

• (1600)

Understanding fully how the new rules will apply is virtually impossible until we see the regulations. Because this type of act has been in place in this country for close to a century we in the opposition parties are prepared to take the department's assurances at face value that these regulations will continue to carry out the functions that the Department of Agriculture has carried out in the past, that it will continue to act responsibly in the future and that regulations will in fact protect producers, consumers and the general health of the population as far as domestic use is concerned, and for the continuation of our good reputation in trading relations.

I am prepared to let the bill have speedy passage and will close my remarks so that that can happen.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Do I have unanimous consent to proceed with Bill C-66?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## HEALTH OF ANIMALS ACT

### MEASURE TO ENACT

The House proceeded to consideration of Bill C-66, an act respecting diseases and toxic substances that may affect animals or that may be transmitted by animals to persons, and respecting the protection of animals, as reported (with amendments) from a legislative committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** There is one motion set down on the Order Paper for the report stage of Bill C-66, an act respecting diseases and toxic substances that may affect animals or that may be trans-