

### Government Orders

That Bill C-76, in Schedule II, be amended by replacing line 10, on page 47, with following:

"criteria".

Motion No. 76

That Bill C-76, in Schedule II, be amended: (a) by replacing line 26, on page 47, with the following: "applicant after the payment is received"; and (b) by replacing lines 33 to 44, on page 46, and lines 1 to 4, on page 48, with the following: "respect of an outlay or an expense."

Motion No. 77

That Bill C-76, in Schedule II, be amended by replacing lines 27 to 35, on page 48, with the following: "transition payments; and (c) how interim and final transition pay-".

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ)** moved:

Motion No. 78

That Bill C-76, be amended by deleting Schedule II, on pages 46 to 48.

**Mr. Riis:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak to this part of Bill C-76, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget that was tabled on February 27, 1995.

At the outset I want to say that while we are speaking on a number of sections of the bill we find that this is one of the more regressive pieces of budgetary legislation that this country has ever seen in terms of moving Canada backward into a bygone era. I had hoped that a budget would be brought in to advance the economic, social and cultural agenda of the country. I do not think anyone can say anything other than this will set us back. It is like looking only in the rear view mirror while driving.

The provisions we are looking at under group 3 by and large eliminate the Crow rate benefit from the legislation. It takes the whole matter of the demise of the Crow outside of this piece of legislation. Farmers in western Canada developed their grain industry on the basis of three fundamental pillars and in close partnership with the federal government.

One pillar was a grain transportation system built around the Crow subsidy. I recognize that to compete particularly with the United States which has a whole set of subsidy programs for its western grain producers and the fact that our grain producers were some distance from the coast where the grain would be exported, having some kind of a grain subsidy built into the transportation system made a lot of sense. It enabled us to become a global bread basket as a result.

The second pillar was the orderly marketing system through the Canadian Wheat Board on the basis of equal delivery opportunity and a price pooling system. We could say if people were to evaluate this objectively that over the years this has served this country well.

The third pillar was a grain handling system owned by the farmers through a western Canadian co-operative system.

When I look at this particular initiative of the government, which in a sense is abandoning the Crow rate, it reminds me of a previous Prime Minister who spoke of certain sacred trusts. He said that as a result of these trade deals we would not see any diminution in the quality of our social programs. We know that did not take place. We have seen the erosion of virtually every social program. We have seen the disappearance of social programs as we have moved our social programs to harmonize more closely with those in Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee and east Texas. That is not the kind of Canada we expected.

• (1700)

Prior to the government's taking office it said it did not agree with the provisions of NAFTA either; that unless the provisions of NAFTA were dramatically shifted, altered and amended it would abrogate the deal. That did not take place at all. As soon as it took office there were a couple of little tinkers; it has now become a NAFTA cheerleader like we have never seen before.

I do not think the government has a mandate to proceed with this section of the bill. On May 10, 1993 the present Prime Minister said the following at a press conference he called to unveil the party's election campaign farm policy platform: "As federal Liberal leader, our government would prefer to retain the existing Crow rate benefit method of payment rather than change it as the Conservative government is proposing". That was on May 13, 1993 from page 17 of the *Western Producer*.

In other words, heading into the election campaign the Prime Minister, articulating the Liberal Party's agricultural policy, in a sense said they want to retain the Crow rate; the Conservatives do not, but they do as a political party. On that basis people, particularly from the Canadian plains, voted Liberal in such sufficient numbers that they were able to form the government. Now they are doing exactly the opposite. They are abandoning the Crow rate provision.

I do not think it take a rocket scientist to figure out if they say their party policy is to maintain the Crow rate and as soon as they become a government they decide to abandon the Crow rate, they seem to be pulling a fast one on the electorate. They seem to be saying one thing and doing another. I do not think it is unreasonable for us to question whether the government actually has a mandate to proceed with this. Strictly on the basis of principle we are suggesting this section be abandoned.

There is another reason we are suggesting this section of the bill should be abandoned. What are the implications of abandoning the Crow system? I know we have differences of views in the House of Commons. Some people feel this is a good idea for all sorts of reasons; others feel this is a bad initiative. Most people