

*Canada Grain Act*

deliver grain to the elevators of their choice, there is little hope that anyone else can do it.

It was pointed out to the committee by the president of the Saskatchewan wheat pool that this principle, which at one time existed under the car order book, is no longer in force because of a combination of reasons. The first is the arbitrary cancellation by the transport controller of the car order book at periodic intervals. The second is the priority of Canadian wheat board shipping orders over cars listed in the car order book. In 1954 there were around 200 points operating under the car order book but this year there are hardly any, because of the impossibility of operating it under present conditions.

The hon. member for Rosthern pointed out how the allocation of shipping orders by the Canadian wheat board will solve this problem. The Canadian wheat board allocate their shipping orders among the various elevator companies in a proportion not known to anyone. The wheat pool officials admitted having no knowledge of the percentage of shipping orders allocated to the various companies. I believe the hon. member for Rosthern was in the committee on that particular day, and must have heard the president of the Saskatchewan wheat pool make that statement. On that basis the producers are in no position to complain about the allocation of box cars, because they do not know the percentages that have been allocated to the companies.

Further, as the shipping orders are allocated to the companies, there is nothing to state that the grain must be taken from a particular marketing point. The report of the agriculture committee referred to the fact that the grain must be taken at each shipping point in proportion to the wheat board orders provided for that point. The wheat board do not approve an order at each shipping point; they make a request to the elevator companies to deliver a certain amount of grain, but they do not specify at which point that grain is to be taken.

Therefore this attempt to bring it out through Canadian wheat board shipping orders can be made entirely inoperative by the fact that the elevator company can check their shipping orders or draw out their grain from a particular elevator where there is strong competition. This puts the competing elevator companies in an impossible position.

As far as the Saskatchewan wheat pool and other farmer-owned organizations are concerned, they are responsible to the farmers who own the organizations. If cars are being improperly allocated among

[Mr. Johnson (Kindersley).]

points on a railroad division the pool officials will hear about it, but no one is going to tell the line elevators what to do with their cars. Naturally they will spot them where there is the greatest competition from the farmer-owned organization, and thus make this whole business absolutely inoperative.

I think the government is working on the theory that this problem is only temporary. I think they are hoping that if the six months' hoist is given to this bill there will be another rust epidemic in Saskatchewan and the crop will be of the same small proportions as it was last year. They are hoping the problem will disappear in that way. Anyone who knows anything about the grain business—and I could quote Mr. Ben Plumer of the Alberta wheat pool in particular—knows that with the technological developments that have taken place, crops are taken off at a much more rapid rate and there will always be this constant pressure to deliver grain to the elevator of the farmer's choice, if not throughout the year at least at a specific time of the year.

I think it is very obvious that the government is thinking in terms of elevator companies rather than individuals. I recall that last year before the standing committee on agriculture and colonization the Minister of Trade and Commerce said:

We are going to try to solve this problem of car distribution but if we do not solve it no great principle is going to be violated. No one is going to have any serious loss. Why flog away at a problem which, in the light of all the problems facing the wheat producer today, is a very minor one?

The attitude of the government is that this problem is a very minor one as far as the farmers are concerned. Again, in the agriculture committee this year, when I was referring to the allocation of shipping orders between the various companies, the Minister of Trade and Commerce said this:

You raised the question of percentages; no one else has raised it. Are you raising it for curiosity? If an injured party wants to raise it that is all right, but certainly you are not an injured party in the matter.

My reply was:

Well, I have been injured in that as a farmer I have had to deliver grain to companies other than those of my choice.

The percentage of allocation among the elevator companies determines the ability of the farmers to deliver grain to the elevator of their choice. Those who wish to deliver to the farm-owned organizations will realize how they can become injured through their inability to do so. I have in my hand, Mr. Speaker, a statement of the excess charges refund from the Saskatchewan wheat pool. It is dated 15th February, 1955, for the