

*Canadian Wheat Board*

Tuesday last session just as it has at this session. I am gratified to have an opportunity of saying a few words on this question which I consider to be of great importance, especially to the farmers of western Canada.

I listened with a great deal of interest to what the hon. member for Battle River (Mr. Fair) has just said. I have made quite a study of this subject. At the time he introduced the bill for first reading I was surprised to note that most of his time was taken up in condemning the grain exchange as such. As far as I can see, this bill deals exclusively with the Canadian wheat board; it is an amendment to the Canadian Wheat Board Act. I am not unmindful of what implications there may be from the operations of the board that affect the grain exchange, but I think we should be more concerned with the effect that this bill will have on the Canadian wheat board than on the effect it may have on the Winnipeg grain exchange.

There are various ways of dealing with the grain exchange as such, and I am certainly not of the opinion that the onus of closing that exchange should be placed upon the Canadian wheat board. I think all hon. members will agree that this board has done a magnificent job since the start of the war. We should be careful before we start tampering with the organization or the administration of the board.

Before dealing further with this contentious matter, I should like to place on record a few words which I feel will meet with the approval of all hon. members, particularly those who come from western Canada. I wish to refer briefly to the manner in which the officials of the Canadian wheat board have discharged their duties and to commend particularly the chairman of the board for the efficient and obliging manner in which he has discharged his responsibilities as chief commissioner of the board since 1938. All those who have had dealings with Mr. McIvor will appreciate the full implications of my remark. To my mind, he has done a great job since the date of his appointment, and more particularly during the war. One has but to look at the reports of the wheat board to appreciate the extent of his responsibilities. In spite of his heavy duties as chief commissioner he has agreed repeatedly to serve on various committees. Hon. members will have noticed that he was the first to speak at the conference in London. He has been serving as chairman of the combined food board since January, 1943, and he has served his country well on the emergency grain transportation committee since 1943. After eight years as

[Mr. Jutras.]

chief commissioner he is still the affable business man, anxious to help his fellowmen and keenly interested in showing a favourable balance sheet at the end of the year. It is no accident that he enjoys the confidence of his organization and his fellowmen.

I wish also to commend Doctor Grindley, as well as many others whom I do not happen to know personally but whose good work has attracted our attention. I should like to refer particularly to the field inspectors in my province. They deserve commendation for their responsible sense of duty and their sincere desire to have the administration of the board above reproach.

Mr. BURTON: Why not compliment the farmers who raised the wheat?

Mr. JUTRAS: I shall come to that afterward.

An hon. MEMBER: Why not stick to the subject?

Mr. JUTRAS: I am perfectly in order and I resent that remark very much. If this bill does not deal with the Canadian wheat board, I do not know what it deals with. The trouble with most of the discussion so far has been that it referred to the grain exchange and there is no mention whatsoever in the bill of the grain exchange. Then the hon. member remarked that this bill would be talked out. Surely he was not referring to the present speaker because I certainly cannot be accused of having taken too much of the time of this house. Those who say, "No, no," certainly cannot say the same. If the hon. member is seized at all with the importance of this bill he would not try to rush it through in one or even two hours. If the bill is so insignificant that it can be rushed through the house in half an hour or in an hour and a half, it is not worth considering. If it has any value at all it should be considered for at least a few hours and more than one member on the opposite side of the house given an opportunity of discussing it.

Mr. BURTON: All I was asking you to do was to give the farmers a little credit.

Mr. JUTRAS: I shall come to the farmers in due course.

Mr. BURTON: They are always left at the tail end.

Mr. JUTRAS: I think I am quite capable of organizing my own speech, if you do not mind.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: You must admit that the bill has been before the house for two years.