

Canadian Livestock Feed Board

The need for an advisory committee should be obvious under present circumstances. We are dealing with a very complex problem and certainly no one on Friday tried to minimize the complexity of the factors that will have to be taken into account. The very fact that economists and other experts of one kind or another have declared the need for new criteria under which eastern freight rates on grain must be administered is an indication of this need. It takes many weeks for those who are using these rates to understand and interpret them in order to realize whether or not they are being exercised fairly.

If we are to make the best use of the terms that this plan will provide, if we are to make the most adequate use of the resources of the people who are involved on a day to day basis, not from the standpoint of administering a program here in Ottawa but from the standpoint of the people who are trying to make the best use of the program, whether they live in the rural areas of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland or British Columbia, it is important that some objective body be established which can advise the minister, the board and the people who may be concerned.

If what I suggest is not the case, then what kind of an objective look could be taken at this program, apart from an examination and criticism by those who may not be able to obtain the necessary information in order to come to an efficient and honest judgment? I think an advisory committee is necessary in light of the fact we are dealing here with a program regarding an effective method by which adjustments should be made in various areas. It is certain that we cannot lay down in very simple terms a program that is going to apply with equal fairness to southern Ontario, for example, and to some part of Newfoundland. Who is going to provide the necessary interpretation to the board in order that it can make the right kind of adjustment allowing the program to be administered fairly and with equity of opportunity?

The kind of thing mentioned by the hon. member for Medicine Hat last week is vitally important in this area and I do not think we are going to obtain the desired result unless we are prepared to establish a group of individuals who will have an independence of judgment and the information necessary to make independent judgments. I am not suggesting that we establish a group with decision-making powers or the administrative powers which will be left with the board.

Certainly I am not suggesting that we establish a second board, but I do suggest that the advisory committee must be such that it will have some meaning and will encourage the farmers and producers to realize that they are obtaining the services of a board in terms of storage or transportation rate adjustments on the soundest basis possible.

While I mentioned on Friday that I hoped something similar to the rural development council would be instituted, on again reading the provisions establishing that council I must admit I have had some second thoughts. Therefore I certainly would not regard that council as some kind of standard to be followed in inaugurating this advisory committee at this point.

Mr. Sauvé: I really do not see what I can add to what I have said. Clause 15 of the bill is clear in that it gives the advisory committee a number of powers. This will be a body similar to the Canadian council on rural development. If the hon. member insists that he is not satisfied with that kind of a council, I can only repeat that what he wants is another board. I cannot accept any modification of this clause which would implement what the hon. gentleman wants.

Mr. Langlois (Mégantic): The minister seems to be somewhat satisfied with clause 15 as it now stands. It does provide for the establishment of an advisory committee. There is no agreement as to the need for such a committee. Our fears are not related so much to the question of who will be appointed to the board as to the question of who should not be appointed to it. An advisory committee such as the one envisaged will present opinions to the board which from time to time will be accepted. There should not be in a bill such as this any kind of opening which would permit the appointment of unscrupulous speculators.

Clause 15, subclause 6, paragraph (a) states that the committee will study and review all matters relating to feed grain transportation, storage, prices and consumption which are referred to it by the minister or by the board. Surely that covers the whole program. I am strongly opposed to any possibility of the appointment to this committee of individuals who are now brokers or members of the Montreal, Winnipeg or Toronto grain exchanges. Let us specify that the members of this committee shall not be individuals who are already selling grain or in the business of