

DREE Grant

area would also benefit because they would have another crushing plant to which they could deliver not only canola but flax seed as well.

On numerous occasions I called the office of the former minister responsible for DREE in an effort to get some information from his executive assistant. However, that is all in the past. The minister is gone, so there is no use pointing those facts out. The minister refused to return my telephone calls. Is that co-operation from a government department? What we really need is freedom of information in legislative form so that we can have information made available to us upon request. With that information we could make progress. We do not serve ourselves; we serve our constituents and, in this case, the constituents of other areas because they naturally would have been delivering to this plant if it were built.

The present situation is quite unacceptable. There is a CSP plant at Nipawin. It serves that area, but despite the fact that plant is there, many farmers have to deliver as far as Saskatoon or Lloydminster, the town on the border between Saskatchewan and Alberta. That is 300 miles away. I suggest there is a better way out.

Cargill Grain made this application realizing that DREE had made a similar grant to CSP at Harrowby, Manitoba. In that case total federal-provincial grants amounted to something in the order of \$5.8 million. A grant to CSP and not to Cargill naturally creates unfair competition.

There are those who believe that the pool is the only way to go. That is fine. I am not arguing about where the producer should take his grain; if the pool serves him, that is fine. If Cargill does not serve him properly, he can certainly stay away from Cargill and Cargill will go out of business. However, Cargill is prepared at this time to put in \$25 million, and I would like to see that plant go ahead.

In an exchange I had with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan), he said that Cargill Grain had made an application. I could not understand why the application was not accepted. He said that, being a multinational, Cargill Grain has all kinds of resources, and then he proceeded to tell me that he officiated at the opening of a storage plant in Quebec City for which a grant was given to Cargill Grain.

Mr. Benjamin: That was wrong too.

Mr. Korchinski: There is something illogical there. Cargill Grain is a multinational and I am sure it can compete if the competition is fair, but the competition is not fair. It is seen to be fair to provide a grant in Quebec. I do not argue against that; there probably was a need. However, there is also an equal need for an oil seed crushing plant at Melfort, Saskatchewan.

There must obviously have been input from some sources to the minister's office at that time. I know the mayor of Melfort supports this application. The Chamber of Commerce supports it. The rural municipalities, Star City, Porcupine Plains and, I presume, several other areas support it. I know the municipality of Nipawin passed a resolution supporting it. The members

of that council represent farmers in that area. CSP is right at Nipawin. CSP does not mind. Farmers want a choice. I have received telephone calls from the Nipawin area, and I have been told that Cargill Grain is offering \$14 a tonne more. I will not argue the merits of Cargill or CSP, but I say that the producers should have a choice as to whether to deliver.

On another occasion I approached the new minister responsible for DREE, who is responsible for applications like this, and the minister told me that after he had taken over he had been approached by Cargill Grain and that he was reviewing certain facts. He told me in the committee on March 23 that several weeks prior to that date he had been approached by Cargill Grain. We are well into May; several months have gone by. He must surely have had time to reflect upon the problem and make a determination. Just a few minutes ago I put in a call to the minister's office and I was told there has not been a reversal of the decision. I am not sure what that means. The department has not made a decision one way or the other, but there has not been a reversal! That means that the department is either dragging its feet or for some reason it is just coasting along.

The minister might have many reasons which he has not made known to me, but it seems to me what is necessary now is that the basis upon which the former minister made his decision be determined. I have indicated that support has come from several areas. I would like to know who opposed that application. Was it the CSP? Was it the pools, which are competitors? Was it the farm unions? Was it the individual farmers who did not want anything to do with Cargill Grain? Was it the rural municipalities? Was it the former NDP government in Saskatchewan?

In the Standing Committee on Agriculture the Minister of Agriculture said to me:

—Cargill . . . has not received the approval of the Saskatchewan government, and that was one of the main reasons why I never approved it . . . they have been very wishy-washy on it in Saskatchewan—the Saskatchewan government.

That was the former Saskatchewan government.

Mr. Angus: The present one too.

Mr. Korchinski: He went on:

They have made quiet objections to it, and then we have asked them to put it in writing. So we have exchanged one or two letters back and forth on it. I do not know what the position of the Saskatchewan government on it is at the present time, but they certainly did not endorse it at one stage of the game.

I would like to know from where that opposition came. I know there was opposition; that is quite evident. I see articles in the newspaper by leading New Democrats who oppose this. I have copies of those articles. Is the department handing out grants to co-operatives and socialist ventures and to no one else? Is that the approach the department is taking? We got rid of one socialist government in Saskatchewan, but we still have a socialist government here in Ottawa. It is bordering on communism because it has already gone beyond the socialist stage. It is past its infancy. It has grown up, and it is taking over industry after industry instead of encouraging them.