

Canadian Livestock Feed Board

I appreciate the history behind the introduction of this measure—to get away from the paying of subsidies by stimulating local growth. Over a period of years I am sure this will be the most effective way of providing an answer to our problems.

Mr. Sauv : I must suggest that the problem the hon. member is raising is only a problem because we are and have been paying subsidies on transportation costs for the movement of western feed grain to the maritimes. If no transportation subsidy was being paid there would be no problem, so far as moving feed grain from Port Arthur and Fort William to eastern Canada is concerned. On the basis of the hon. member's argument, we must assume that local producers of feed grain and corn could compete in all Canadian markets.

I suggest the hon. member's problem is related to the transportation subsidy being paid on feed grain, and that inasmuch as his problem is related to transportation subsidies, we have the authority to solve it without having to amend the act.

Mr. Nowlan: Without prolonging this discussion, let me suggest that we should have some clear and obvious indication that some effort is being made to remove this whole problem from the sphere of subsidies, about which many of our members have reservations. Let us put this whole thing on a constructive basis. I appreciate the minister's interpretation and understanding, but unfortunately some of our courts, and others, will take a different reaction to this bill. I am afraid that, so far as the solution to some of these individual problems is concerned, decisions will be made, by unauthorized officials, the result of which will be a lack of stimulus or incentive to the growth of eastern feed grain.

Mr. Sauv : My suggestion is that this whole problem exists because the federal government has paid this transportation subsidy since 1941 and that, had there been no such subsidy, there would be no such problem. I do not see how we could amend the act in the way the hon. member suggests to meet his purpose. It is my belief that, as a result of the provisions of the clause he has mentioned, we will find other methods of providing the assistance necessary to satisfy his proposition and that posed by the hon. member for Kent (Ont.).

The problems the hon. member for Digby-Annapolis-Kings referred to relate directly to the transportation subsidy that has been paid since 1941, and would not exist, I

[Mr. Nowlan.]

suggest, had we not paid the subsidy. By accepting an amendment such as he has suggested we would be acting contrary to the intention of the act in terms of its relationship to transportation costs. We are studying this problem and hope to find some solution to the difficulties he has outlined. This problem has been referred to by various corn growers in Ontario.

Mr. Danforth: Mr. Chairman, I should like again to refer the minister to the powers of this board and the implications of clause 8 (2), which deals with the disposal of feed grain. I am concerned because these powers as outlined will allow this government appointed board to do almost anything it wishes regarding the feed grain trade, right from production to disposal.

Let me refer to an extreme situation. By virtue of the powers of this board, as envisaged in the bill, the board could designate a sole purchasing agent, selling agent, storing agent and transportation agent in every eastern province and in British Columbia. This board by virtue of the proposed powers could designate one trucking company as the sole transporter of feed grain. In this regard one need only read clause 9 in conjunction with clause 6 paragraph (k) which states:

The board may, in furtherance of its objects, . . . generally, do and authorize such acts and things as are necessary or incidental to the attainment of the objects and purposes of the board and the exercise of its powers and the performance of its duties.

Unless the minister can convince me otherwise, this gives the board in its wisdom the power to control by directive every segment of the industry.

• (4:40 p.m.)

Mr. Sauv : I do not understand that point, Mr. Chairman. Obviously laws should be as perfect as possible when they are drafted; but I cannot see this extreme case developing, under our system. I do not understand how we could amend the clause in a way that would satisfy the hon. member.

Mr. Danforth: I admit that I am quoting extreme cases. I am quoting them for the purpose of illustrating that there is, without doubt, extreme power vested in this particular board. Although these are the most extreme cases that I can think of, will the minister agree with me that under the provisions set out in this clause it is conceivable and possible that the board does in effect have the very power to which I have referred?