

Canadian Wheat Board Act

from my friends from those provinces—that corn and other commodities are being imported from the United States.

There is a third point concerning the matter of quotas. We now hear the minister boast that there is now a five-bushel and six-bushel quota in existence. He has not explained to the farmers, to the House or to the media, that the new quota is based on a much smaller acreage. The farmers would like to hear something about this. I would like to take the Minister of Agriculture to my farm in Saskatchewan. I would ask him why grain is not moving off the farms at Rosetown and Kindersley and why the farmers do not have cash.

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, if the House would give unanimous consent I would be very happy to answer this question.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether the minister has spoken but when I am finished I shall be quite prepared to give consent, as I am sure the House will, because we want a solution to the problem.

I am sure the hon. member for Hamilton-Wentworth (Mr. Gibson) was not sent here by his constituents to holler and shout, as he did today during the question period, just so the Prime Minister could make a quick answer. I would hope that he would listen to those who want to make a contribution, if he does not wish to make a contribution himself, and start acting like a gentleman.

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, could I ask the hon. member a question?

Mr. Woolliams: Certainly.

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, has the hon. member taken into account the fact that there is not only a five-bushel and six-bushel quota on wheat but also a 20-bushel quota on flax and a 30-bushel on barley, all of which used to be counted within the six-bushel per specified acres.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, my answer to that is that I would have hoped the Minister of Agriculture would have told the truth. The quotas he is talking about are not based on the previous acreage. Under the old quota system, the quota in respect of wheat was based on the total acreage; not only that planted in wheat, flax, barley or rye, but the total acreage of the farm. If you had 640 acres under cultivation and planted only 200 acres of wheat your quota was based on 640 acres. Today it is based on production under the new Lift program. There is no use giving answers of this kind because they are far from honest or factual. The Minister of Agriculture will not tell the facts in the House or out on the farms. I am sorry he takes the attitude he does.

My point is that these quotas are based on the Lift program rather than on the old system of total acreage. The tenant who operates my farm tells me that what he really has in wheat, compared to what he used to have, is about a two-bushel quota. That is not enough to pay either his expenses or the taxes on the land which my father pioneered and homesteaded in Saskatchewan. If all farmers are in the same economic plight as that farmer

[Mr. Woolliams.]

is, then they are in dire straits. I will be surprised if the Minister of Agriculture makes any contribution to the election in Saskatchewan because I think the most dangerous thing Thatcher has to face today is the Liberal government's policies in respect of agriculture and other things that affect the Prairies. I do not think the minister can deny this. I am sure he cannot say he has not had complaints, not only in respect of this legislation but also in respect of the whole agricultural program. He tries to pass the buck over here. I am sure he has had protests from the farmers who are in dire straits.

Questions have been asked today, for instance. The government was asked whether it is bringing in legislation which would protect against the vigorous efforts of government agencies to collect the money lent to farmers. I have received dozens of letters from farmers in the province of Alberta who indicate that they cannot meet the interest on the money. The government is pressing as hard as it did in the 1930's, in the days of Aberhart and Manning. The policies of this government are bringing the farmers to the point of bankruptcy.

Mr. Olson: The louder the better!

Mr. Woolliams: Sometimes it is necessary to get certain points across to you.

Mr. Paproski: It has to come out loud and clear for you.

Mr. Olson: It must be logical, too.

Mr. Woolliams: My first point had to do with the cash flow to the farmer. My second point was in respect of free trade between provinces and my third point concerns quotas. I wish to return to the question of free trade between provinces. My recommendation is that the minister, under this legislation or by regulation, permit free trade of farm goods between all provinces. The former Chief Justice of Canada, who is now retired, said in this regard:

It seems clear that the enactment—

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—of such a prohibition would be beyond the powers of any provincial legislature and so would appear prima facie to fall within the powers of Parliament under the opening words of s. 91 of the British North America Act and to be valid, unless it contravenes s. 121 of that Act.

Section 121 of that Act deals with free trade between the provinces in plain ordinary English.

It may be that if, on its true construction, s. 32 would have the effect of prohibiting the supposed transportation it would be in conflict with s. 121 as being a prohibition which, to borrow the words of my brother Rand, "in its essence and purpose is related to a provincial boundary" and not being a regulation of trade or commerce (since there are difficulties in regarding a person as engaged in trade or commerce with himself) or a necessary incident of such regulation. If this be so it would furnish a strong reason for construing s. 32 as excluding from its operation the transportation in the case supposed, but I do not find it necessary to reach a final conclusion on the point—

In other words, in *CPR versus Murphy*, 1958 Supreme Court Reports at page 644 the Chief Justice said in effect that the prohibition of free trade between provinces