

ment. We have realized that personal care, in Canada, is among the most costly in the world. So, this government has proposed to the provinces a new formula to enable them better to administer health services and to reduce costs considerably.

We believe that nothing should prevent us from providing more Canadians with the best care, and this, as soon as possible and at reduced cost. This government has not only suggested a more appropriate formula than that introduced a few years ago, but has even suggested that a special fund of \$640 million be set up to finance the whole restructuring of the care distribution system, in accordance with the particular needs of each province.

[English]

GRAIN—ACTION ON COMPLAINT ABOUT GRAIN DOORS
AT WESTERN DELIVERY POINTS

Mr. Bill Knight (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I asked a question in the House of Commons today about the very pressing necessity in terms of the transportation of grain from western Canada to our customers overseas. The problem pertains to grain doors on boxcars and their inadequacy. I pointed out that this matter was brought to my attention by the Estlin, Gray, Riceton and Bechard area of my constituency.

The only answer I received from the minister was the comment that the problem exists in northern Saskatchewan as well. I suggest, with all due respect, that that answer is not good enough. I should like to read into the record a letter I received from the Gray pool committee and the others involved. This is a letter sent to Mr. R. G. Hodge, assistant superintendent, Canadian National Railways, Regina:

We wish to bring to your attention the urgent necessity of grain doors at the four shipping points of Estlin, Gray, Riceton and Bechard.

From the information that comes to us we have found out that it is not just a local situation.

With the amount of grain there will be to move right away we feel that extraordinary measures should be taken to remedy the situation as soon as possible.

This letter is written as a result of a joint pool committee meeting of the above points held April 27, 1972.

Yours truly,

Leroy Moats,
Secretary, Gray Pool Committee.

copies to:

Hon. Otto Lang

Mr. Bill Knight, M.P.

Cy McDonald

Mr. A. Millstone

Allen Blakeney, Premier of Saskatchewan

Leader Post, Regina.

• (2020)

This whole question has been on the minds of the agents of elevator companies for a long time, yet no answer is forthcoming. The question relates to the problem of a type of cardboard grain door presently being used. The minister in charge of the Wheat Board (Mr. Lang) suggested on

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previous occasions that he had met with private interests to discuss the problem of these grain doors. I wonder if he has taken the opportunity to meet representatives of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Association which represents most of the grain agents in the province of Saskatchewan. I doubt it.

With regard to this whole question of grain doors, it has been brought to my attention that a new type of grain door has been patented by an agent in the constituency of Fraser Valley West in the Burnaby region. This gentleman patented a door made out of plywood surrounded by rubber so that it can fit very easily into a boxcar. It is far more efficient than the door now being used.

Each time we direct a question to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board concerning transportation we are asked to direct the question to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson), particularly on days when he is not here. Then when we direct our questions to the Minister of Transport we are at times referred back to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board. The all important question is: Who is in charge of transport? Frequently the answers we receive are that the matter is under active consideration or that the minister is consulting those involved. The buck is passed continually between the two cabinet ministers. The question is whether there is a minister in the House who happens to be a minister of action.

In this whole area of transportation I have asked questions of the Minister of Transport regarding the leasing of boxcars from the United States for the movement of grain. He told me that he had been in contact with the CNR and will be in contact with the CPR in future. I have asked him questions regarding the priority of the railroads in terms of the \$5 million allocated to buy flatcars at a time when there was a hue and cry in the west to buy hopper cars for the movement of grain.

We are not getting answers to these questions from the representatives of government departments concerned. I hope that this evening we will receive a direct and comprehensive answer to this very important problem of grain doors for boxcars, for the purpose of improving the shipment of grain to our markets. It may seem to those who are not familiar with the movement of grain that this is not an important matter, but to the farmers who are moving their grain it is an extremely important question to which I hope we will receive tonight a direct and comprehensive answer—a better answer than we received this afternoon.

Mr. Gérard Duquet (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, following the question which the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Knight) raised in the House this afternoon, the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board obtained the following information from the two railway companies regarding the current position of grain doors in the province of Saskatchewan. Canadian National Railways informed the minister that except for those lines west of North Battleford, west of Kindersley and west of Biggar, all railway grain stations in Saskatchewan are supplied with wooden grain doors. Occasionally the supply of wooden grain doors is depleted at individual stations, and in this event paper doors are substituted until such time as the supply of wooden doors is replenished.