

Department of Transport Act

get the advantage in box car distribution and Saskatchewan is left in a very inferior position. We say that the allocation of box cars should be on a fairer basis. We also say that the formula presented by the wheat pool organizations and advanced by the Saskatchewan wheat pool in particular is a better formula; namely that farmers should have a right to state in their permit book or by some other means where they wish to deliver their grain at a given market point each year, and that the allocation of box cars amongst the elevator companies at that point should be on the basis of those deliveries and that opinion set forth by the farmers in their wheat board permit books.

It is correct to say that hon. members of the Social Credit group have usually supported that proposition, but they have not done so consistently. As far as I can recall at this time, though I would stand subject to correction, there has not been a member of the Conservative party on the agriculture committee who has opposed the allocation of box cars as advanced by the farm organizations, but I do remember very clearly the opinion set forth by the hon. member for Medicine Hat. His opinion is found at page 374 of the minutes of the standing committee on agriculture and colonization of June 3, 1955.

Mr. Marler: I cannot help thinking, Mr. Chairman, that this discussion, while very interesting, has no connection with the transport controller or with the provisions of section 6A of the Department of Transport Act. The hon. member will have another opportunity of talking about the distribution of box cars. He already has a bill on the order paper to accomplish that purpose. I have found myself asking for some time, Mr. Chairman, whether these remarks, interesting as they may be, are relevant to the subject now before the committee.

The Deputy Chairman: I have been giving some thought to the same point myself, more particularly because there is an anticipation rule. No one knows better than the hon. member for Assiniboia that there is a bill on the order paper dealing with the allocation of box cars to the elevator, as he puts it, of a farmer's choice. At the same time there has been permitted in this debate so much discussion as to what are and what are not the powers of the transport controller that it would be difficult if not unfair for me suddenly to rule discussion of that matter out of order.

I think perhaps I would be justified in suggesting to the hon. member for Assiniboia and those who may follow him that we are

really bound in this discussion by matters which are or which should be in some people's opinions within the powers of the transport controller. While I am not at the moment ruling the hon. member out of order, I am going to request him to stick pretty closely to the terms of the resolution and the powers of the transport controller, and indicate that if he gets away from that subject later on I shall have to ask him to confine his remarks to it.

Mr. Argue: I think, Mr. Chairman, your statement is completely fair in every respect. I believe that under the powers of the transport controller set forth in the act and the regulations he has the power to do the type of thing which I have been suggesting. I want to agree wholeheartedly with the minister's statement that the transport controller has never used that power, and at no time has he allocated box cars even to a given delivery point, as far as I know, and certainly not amongst the elevator companies at a delivery point. It is done on the basis of following up the over-all shipping orders of the Canadian wheat board, and this has resulted in a very bad allocation of box cars.

To support the statement I have made that a Social Credit member, the hon. member for Medicine Hat, was opposed to a change in the present system I read from page 374 of the minutes of the standing committee on agriculture and colonization of Friday, June 3, 1955, as follows:

However, I think our present set-up is about as fair as we can have it and I might say again that every witness who appeared before us with the exception of Mr. Wesson agreed that there was nothing much which could be done about any change in the box car system at the present time.

That was the dissenting voice in the agriculture committee as far as the distribution of box cars based on the farmer's own choice was concerned. I opened my remarks by saying that at the present time the farmers in Saskatchewan are asking for two things. They are asking that more box cars be made available immediately at the delivery point so there may be a greater equalization of delivery quotas within Saskatchewan and throughout the three prairie provinces. They repeat their request that steps be taken through the office of the transport controller, who has undoubtedly the power, or by some other means to establish a system of box car distribution whereby farmers may deliver grain to the elevator of their own choice.

Mr. Quelch: The hon. member for Assiniboia has gone to some length to try to prove that we of this group at this time have not supported them in asking that the transport