

Canadian Wheat Board Act

resolution was passed demanding action and requesting that the information be forwarded to the attention of the minister. The quotation is as follows:

I was directed to . . . present our local's strongest protest against the machinery that is in motion for the absorption of rape and flax to come under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board—

Our local feels that the board has made a mess of the wheat situation in the last number of years and we would sooner gamble with rape on the open market, than let them gum up the works—

I would appreciate your passing our feelings to . . . the powers in Ottawa who seem determined to bury us in our summer-fallow.

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the fears the producers and producer groups have in my part of the country. Alberta is a significant producer of rapeseed. I would hope, as the hon. member for Mackenzie suggested, this portion of the bill would be withdrawn or amended in such a way that the producers, either through a plebiscite or some other form of referendum, could indicate their desire one way or the other.

The members of the New Democratic Party want this measure adopted. It meets with their approval. However, I say to the minister through you, Mr. Speaker, that the group lost its credibility long ago. We have only to look at the side they were on in the recent rail strike threat. In the course of the debate the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin) suggested that the members of the Conservative party would have to make up their minds because they could not have it both ways. I say to those hon. members who allegedly support the western farm interest that it is they who will have to make up their minds, because they will have to establish themselves as either coming out on the side of the farmers or on the side of the unions. They cannot serve both; they cannot have it both ways.

I believe therein lies a conflict of interest. The hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre referred to parasites living off the backs of farmers. I would sooner have live parasites serving a useful purpose than half-dead ones living off the western farmer. The members of the New Democratic Party are in a position in which they are waffling in respect of where they stand with regard to Bill C-176. The basic philosophy is agreeable to them but they know the majority of producers are not with them.

It is interesting to note that the Barber commission also has a very interesting section on the matter of unions in respect of the difficulties many farmers have experienced in obtaining repair parts, particularly during the busy season and at weekends. A press release of the Royal Commission on Farm Machinery points out that farmers have encountered difficulties because of weekend interruption of parts supply and delivery services. Because of union agreements affecting assignment of staff duties and overtime pay the companies are sometimes unwilling to supply weekend service. The cost may run up to \$45 to meet a single emergency. Union regulations of this kind appear to show an almost callous disregard on the part of the union for the welfare of farmer customers. So here again we have a very significant development. We know

[Mr. Mazankowski.]

that the members of the New Democratic Party are largely supported by the labour unions. . . .

• (9:00 p.m.)

Mr. Thomson: The labour unions certainly did not elect me.

Mr. Mazankowski: If that is so, then I suggest to the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley (Mr. Thomson) that he had better start looking after the farmers rather than the labour unions, or he will not be here the next time. It is only fair to say that you cannot serve two masters. I am sure the minister knows that these birds only speak for a few.

Having said that, I hope the minister in his wisdom—and I respect his intelligence—will see fit to withdraw that provision or will accept an amendment which I believe will be proposed, so that we have at least one segment of the grain trade free of the shackles of government impairment.

Mr. Stan Schumacher (Palliser): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Boulanger: Here is another filibuster.

Mr. Schumacher: I do not know what the comments coming from the hon. member for Mercier (Mr. Boulanger) have to do with the subject at hand, but after all it is his side of the House that is proposing this legislation which even the minister who is proposing it says will probably not be used. The trouble is that the minister will not be around forever; somebody else might be slipped into his slot and might use the legislation. That is why we are taking this opportunity to oppose the legislation. I think the time of this House should be used for things that are necessary, and even the minister who is proposing the legislation says it is not necessary at this time. Therefore there is plenty of time to talk about it if the government insists upon calling it.

This bill, like its comrade Bills C-244, C-239 and C-176, is designed to make agriculture the most closely regulated segment of our economy. These four bills subject the producers of agricultural products to totalitarian control. The various agencies of government will be able to monitor the producer's every move. This legislation falls particularly heavily on western farmers. Perhaps the government is not aware of the feelings of western producers, which might be understandable because they do not have many members from that part of the country.

There used to be a time when there were no Liberal members from the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. Of course, the cry at that time during an election was, "Give us some members so that we will know what you want". Well, that is not the case now. There is representation on the government side from every western province. However, we do not find that that representation is doing much to protect the interests of western Canadians, so I do not think that argument can be used any more.