

*Canada Grain Act*

good for the agricultural industry. Because this is not the case in regard to the legislation now proposed we have seen fit to put down amendments intended to make it better legislation. The hon. member suggested we should not do this, that we should shut our eyes to the defects of the government's proposal. We do not forget that the government has already produced two farm bills which failed to meet the needs of the country. Do hon. members to my left now say we should be silent? If that is so, it is not my understanding of the parliamentary process or of the rights of members of this House, particularly of members of the opposition.

I just heard from the ranks of those supporting the previous speaker a voice saying the magic word "Lisgar". Is this why that great speech was made? Is there concern about a by-election which is going on? Is this the pitch, irrespective of the merits of the bill? Is an attempt being made to prey upon the sympathy of the farmers, to persuade them that legislation which contains great defects should be passed and that we should gloss over those defects? I would not like to think that members of the NDP would be guilty of such tactics. It may be that what I gathered was meant, was not really meant—but time will tell.

Somebody made the statement a short while ago that one of the problems attached to selling our grain arose through damned poor merchandising. Never was a truer statement made. We in this party, as well as members of the New Democratic Party, have for some years been pleading with the government and with its creation, the Canadian Wheat Board, to involve themselves in a more competent, reliable and sensible system of merchandising. At last it would appear that the then Minister without Portfolio, now the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Lang), who has in addition to his other onerous responsibilities, responsibility for the Wheat Board, has listened to us. I would judge this to be the reason there has been a greater measure of success in improving grain sales; the government has at last seen reason and done the things it should have done years ago.

I have explained why I cannot go along with the reasoning of the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Gleave), bearing in mind the position his party took with regard to the other bill to which I referred. Since then it has been established how defective the other bill was. This party suggested a simple method by which that bill could have been

improved. An amendment of not more than a few lines could have been inserted requesting this House and Parliament to grant the government the right to pass regulations dealing with protein content.

I am not saying that I would have supported such an amendment, but that is beside the point. It was a simple way in which this issue could have been divorced from many of the obnoxious features of the bill before us. It is not all bad; there are parts of it I could support. I do not commit myself to supporting all the amendments set down in the name of members of this party. But there are other aspects of this bill which no responsible Member of Parliament could approve, knowing the attitude of the government in its voracious quest for power and its lust for securing authority to pass regulations and Orders in Council which intimately affect all the people of Canada. I say this after spending 2½ years studying the nature of the beast sitting over there. I am speaking politically, of course, Mr. Speaker.

In these circumstances we are bound to be most cautious when it comes to granting this government the authoritarian and bureaucratic powers it so obviously craves. We shall be even more cautious in this respect during the session which is shortly to open. I say to the minister that if the bill before us is not passed during the present session, and if he brings it back in the new session, he would do well to make changes in the legislation which will make it more palatable. I would advise him strongly to ensure that changes such as I have suggested are brought about. It should certainly not be passed until the House has appointed a committee of scrutiny charged with responsibility for examining this measure in detail, particularly these dangerous grants of power along the lines of others which have been given to the government and which are being exercised every day, every week and every month to the detriment of the people of Canada. If the minister believes we shall not exercise our duty in this sense, he is making a serious mistake.

● (3:50 p.m.)

I can understand what my friends on the left say about the granting of bureaucratic powers. At least they are honest. Securing a large measure of bureaucratic control in certain fields is part of the policy we have heard much about from Toronto during the last few days. But I am amazed at the Liberals, the party, allegedly, that espouses liberalism.