

*Deliveries of Grain to Feed Mills*

The Minister of Trade and Commerce comes from the prairie provinces. The Canadian Wheat Board Act is being administered under his jurisdiction and in his department. This act is very dear to the hearts of most of the well-informed agricultural producers and leaders in the three prairie provinces. Although this act has been built up though not originated by a previous administration of another party, I would hope that in general the operations of the Canadian Wheat Board Act can be kept apart from and beyond partisan political considerations, and that the Canadian wheat board and the Canadian Wheat Board Act will not be weakened in their jurisdiction and their administration.

When I first saw this resolution, Mr. Speaker, I was naive enough to think it was on the order paper because the wheat board and the government were disturbed by the fact that a substantial quantity of grain is being marketed today outside of the facilities of the Canadian wheat board. I thought this would be an endeavour to plug the leaks and reinforce the orderly marketing system, and that if necessary the government, the committee and parliament might take steps to strengthen the wheat board's jurisdiction and if necessary ask the provinces to enact complementary legislation that this be done.

I would hope that the committee, after hearing all the evidence, instead of agreeing with the drive of the Canadian feed grain manufacturers' association for their own financial benefit, would turn its mind to making recommendations to strengthen the wheat board system of marketing grain. Instead of making recommendations that would inevitably lead to a reduction in the gross income of western producers from grain, the committee might make recommendations to strengthen and increase the returns from grain and improve the wheat board orderly system of marketing grain, which certainly, so far as Canada is concerned, is the best system, in spite of certain failings that some of us point out from time to time, that this country has been yet able to develop.

*(Translation):*

**Mr. Samuel Boulanger (Drummond-Arthabaska):** Mr. Speaker, because of this resolution which appears on the order paper in the name of the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Churchill), I have been reading various farm newspapers in the prairie provinces in an attempt to learn the views of western farmers on this resolution. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find any indication of the attitude of western farmers.

We would have liked the minister to tell us in greater detail what he has in mind in asking that the committee:

Be empowered to examine and inquire into the delivery of grain by producers to feed mills operating in the designated area as defined by the Canadian Wheat Board Act, and to report to the house observations and proposals thereon.

We would have liked the minister to go into greater detail before being asked to take a more definite position on this issue.

At this stage of the resolution, when we lack the necessary details, it is hard to say what is behind this bill, or to decide whether it will be beneficial or detrimental to western farmers.

The fact that this motion providing for an examination of the delivery of western grain to the mills is being introduced today probably means, I am afraid, that surprises will be forthcoming at the committee stage. I find this amazing, because in the past there have been agricultural resolutions of a national character which were not submitted to the committee on agriculture and colonization. There was, for instance, the Agricultural Prices Stabilization Act, which was quite important but nevertheless was not considered in the committee on agriculture.

There were also other national matters, such as the legislation on land use, on the conservation of forests and waters, which have yet to be introduced.

In this case, however, it is a matter of local interest, and to my knowledge, it is the first time such a motion is made, proposing that the matter be referred to the committee on agriculture and colonization.

I hope the minister will be giving us more information soon, so that we can be in a better position to assess this legislation, in the interests of western farmers.

*(Text):*

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the house ready for the question?

**Mr. Mariin (Essex East):** Is the minister going to answer the questions?

**Mr. Speaker:** If the minister speaks now he will close the debate.

**Mr. Churchill:** Mr. Speaker, this is a subject that could involve a very long debate in the house. I gave a brief summary of some of the background material, and certain other matters were filled in by the hon. member for Assiniboia. I think it is perfectly obvious that a committee is the proper place to make a study of such a complicated subject.