

Canadian Livestock Feed Board

feeder and the family farmer. I am very preoccupied by the fact that some large operators have been deriving the majority of their profit from the subsidization of transportation costs under the formula that exists at the present time.

I am sure the board will consider this problem and come to the same conclusion as the hon. member, because I have also been concerned with this situation. This problem has been discussed with the administration of the feed grain assistance program, and we feel that when the board is established it will be able to cope with it effectively.

Mr. Olson: Mr. Chairman, the minister has said that he is cognizant of this problem and is looking for ways and means of solving it. He also said he is confident that the board will find ways and means of coping with the situation and will perhaps institute a system of quotas or some other method of dealing with the problem. Would the minister care to tell the committee what other methods the government has in mind for solving the problem, after the discussions that have taken place to date?

Mr. Sauvé: Mr. Chairman, I cannot elaborate very much more on this point. I have been exploring this problem with the feed grain board administration. I would not want to say any more in this connection because until I have more precise information I can hardly state my views on the method that will be used.

Mr. Schreyer: Mr. Chairman, in reply to the hon. member for Medicine Hat the minister said it would be possible under this bill and the regulations to come to grips with the problem which has been outlined. But that is rather different from saying that it is the intention or inclination of the government to come to grips with it. I should like to support with all the emphasis I can muster the comments made by the hon. member for Medicine Hat. This legislation can be of considerable benefit to the bona fide small farm operators of eastern Canada and British Columbia. But unless the government is prepared to implement some kind of quota system under this legislation or, as an alternative, unless it is prepared to give a more precise definition of the term "livestock feeder" so as to exclude in whole or in part the factory-type feed lot operation, the legislation will lose its benefit in so far as the small, bona fide farmer is concerned.

In my opinion it would be unfortunate in the extreme if the legislation were to be adopted and applied in such a way that it allowed the factory-type operation or the vertically integrated type of operation to benefit to the same or a greater degree, because of large volume, as the people this legislation is really intended to benefit most, namely, the small, family-type farming operation. Could the minister be more precise and say that it is not just a case of the government possibly doing something in this respect but that it is their intention to do it?

● (3:30 p.m.)

Mr. Sauvé: It is my intention to examine this situation in the light of the preoccupation of the hon. member for Springfield and the hon. member for Medicine Hat. How we will determine the kind of policy that will be most effective I cannot say at the moment because we have not yet come to any decision on the system that will be used. But I am preoccupied with the problem presented by the large, integrated operator who derives practically all his profit from the subsidy received on the shipment of feed grain. I am, just as you are, trying to find out how we can cope with this for the benefit of the small operator or the farm family operator.

[Translation]

Mr. Clermont: Mr. Chairman, one of the objects of the board is to guarantee the availability of feed grain to meet the needs of livestock breeders and the minister announced recently that the assistance to storage would be discontinued. A few minutes ago, he told us that most millers of the Atlantic provinces had entered into agreements with the railways. I wonder whether the board will be in a position to undertake its work in January or February 1967 and whether the Quebec farmers can be assured that feed grain will be available in eastern Canada or in the province of Quebec during the winter of 1967?

Mr. Sauvé: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I have every reason to believe that there will be a sufficient quantity of grain to meet the needs of the province of Quebec during the fall and winter period.

Mr. Ricard: In the event that there should be a lack of feed grain at a particular time, can the minister give us an assurance that those who have to buy feed grain regularly will not be taken unfair advantage of? It is very nice to hear the minister say: "Yes, we