

Canada Grain Act

Mr. Horner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the words of the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Gleave) and his concern in regard to a wide-ranging debate on the part of members of the House. I do not particularly want to engage the House in a wide-ranging debate on the bill; all I want—perhaps this is a little selfish of me—is to explain the general purport of my objections to Bill C-196 and the reasons I have filed so many amendments to it. I am prepared to do this when speaking to my first amendment to clause 2(10) of the bill.

I did raise the question in the committee, and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) is quite right to refer to the committee proceedings. If one wants to check the record, it is found in committee proceedings No. 39, the purport of my argument being at pages 18 and 19.

Mr. Olson: And repeated at page 21.

Mr. Horner: The minister advises me it is also at page 21, so he is well aware of the matter. The hon. member for Medicine Hat has undergone a tremendous transplantation in thinking in his move from the party that used to be to my extreme left, the Social Credit Party, to the Liberal Party. I say transplantation in thinking, not in brain, though I realize brain transplants are a very recent happening.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member has been given the permission of the House to make a speech general in nature, but I am not sure that the generality should extend this far.

Mr. Horner: I appreciate Your Honour's ruling and I should like to deal in a general way with the bill. This bill creates a mammoth change in the grain industry.

Mr. Olson: An improvement.

Mr. Horner: The minister says it is an improvement. He has made a very important statement and I will write it down. In duly recording those words, let us ask ourselves: An improvement for whom?

Mr. Olson: For the farmers.

Mr. Horner: The minister says it is for the farmers. This act, which has been in effect for 40 years, was designed to safeguard producers' rights; to safeguard them in matters of weighing, sampling, grading, shrinkage, dockage, shipping, boxcars and so on. The purposes of the new act bear no relationship to

[Mr. Speaker.]

the purposes of the old, and this is why I wanted to record the words of the minister. Indeed, the new act enables the government and the railways to control and manage—

An hon. Member: The bureaucrats.

Mr. Horner: Yes, the bureaucrats, as a colleague of mine says—to control and manage the grain handling industry. It does not ensure that the farmers receive fair treatment in the handling and grading of their grain. This new act places the government in complete control at, perhaps, the expense of the producers. The point I want to make clear beyond any shadow of a doubt is that this new act will interfere with the operations of the Wheat Board. The Wheat Board was set up to handle and to safeguard the rights of the producers in the marketing of their grain. It was to bring order into the marketing of grain.

● (9:00 p.m.)

It has often been said that the whole purpose of the bill is to bring about the orderly marketing of grain, not on the part of the railroads, not on the part of the terminals or on the part of the grain companies but in the interests of the producers. But the new act is not designed to give any such assurance to the producers. It in fact interferes with the board which was set up to ensure the producer orderly marketing. I will enunciate just why it does this. We have been told that protein grading means everything. We were told last June, May and April that we had to have protein grading or there would not be a bushel of wheat sold. When I asked Mr. Monk at the committee about this, I had in mind whether he wanted to establish protein grading so that Canada could sell wheat with the highest protein content, perhaps 15.8 per cent or 16 per cent. I asked him whether he wanted Canada to be in a position to sell wheat of this grade, or whether he wanted Canada to be in a position to sell wheat with a uniform protein content. Mr. Monk said we should be in a position to bring about uniformity of our sales and to create uniformity within our grading system in respect of export sales.

Some people have suggested that we are losing sales to Great Britain because we are not selling grain of a high protein content. That is a very interesting suggestion but it has nothing to do with creating uniformity of sales. It is interesting to note what the newspapers say in this regard. The *Western Pro-*