

*Western Grain Transportation Act*

**Mr. Nystrom:** It is very similar to a union. That is why I drew that analogy.

We could also draw an analogy with many other associations; for example, many professional associations such as the bar association, the medical association and, for the business community, the Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, associations for resource industries and the like. All those associations are considered to be very important by their member participants. In the same way the Wheat Board is very important for the farmers of Canada.

● (1115)

When we establish the Senior Grain Transportation Committee and give awesome powers to the Administrator of that Committee, we must ensure that those powers do not in any way restrict the powers and authority of the Canadian Wheat Board. It must remain the supreme agency in terms of the purchasing and selling of wheat, the organization of grain sales by farmers and so on.

There is something else that you, Mr. Speaker, as a fair-minded person would be very much aware of and in agreement with. As I said before, the Canadian Wheat Board is supported by the farmers' money. There is a Wheat Board Advisory Committee which is elected by the farmers. They have considerable influence over what the Wheat Board does. Before becoming a Member of Parliament, the Hon. Member for Humboldt-Lake Centre (Mr. Althouse) was a member of the Canadian Wheat Board Advisory Committee. Roy Atkinson, who has been well known for many years as a farm leader in this country, is now the Chairman of the Advisory Committee of the Canadian Wheat Board. He is from Saskatchewan. He is the former head of the National Farmers' Union and has been very active in farming causes throughout his farming life.

A young man in my constituency, Michael Halyk, has been elected for a second term as a member of the Wheat Board Advisory Committee. This young man who is barely 30, if yet 30, is making a contribution to protecting the farming interests of our community. You can see, Mr. Speaker, that it is a democratic organization in terms of having an advisory committee elected by the farmers.

Stack that up against the kind of Committee that is being created in this House today under Bill C-155. Under Bill C-155 we will have a Senior Grain Transportation Committee. A lot of power will be given to the Administrator. It will not be very democratic. There will be some producers and Wheat Pool members on it, but it will not have the same democratic structure as the Canadian Wheat Board.

For reasons that I have stated, I recommend Motion No. 40 to the House. We welcome the support of the Conservative Party on this Motion of the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin). I appeal to the Liberal Members to listen to the voice of the western farmer, to listen to the voice of the people, and to stand up in this House and accept Motion No. 40. It is a motion that the Wheat Board wants. I can assure Members that it is not just the Wheat Board but the farmers, the farm pools, farm organizations, the UGG and other organ-

izations which represent farmers which want Motion No. 40 to pass so as to ensure that the powers of the Wheat Board are protected.

The powers of the Wheat Board are very important to western farmers. Because of the powers of the corporations, multinationals and big grain companies like Continental Grain, Cargill Grain and the other big sisters of the grain trade, the Wheat Board could be gradually eroded over the next few years. Any kind of loophole left in the law could be the first step down the slippery slope of eroding the powers of the Canadian Wheat Board. We cannot afford to let that happen because it would be very dangerous to farm incomes.

I grew up on a small farm in central Saskatchewan. I recall the old timers in my community talking time and again about the days before the Canadian Wheat Board. They would tell stories of how they would plant their grain in the spring, harvest it in the fall and have no idea what price they would get for the grain. It depended on the grain traders in Chicago and the Richardsons in Winnipeg and the private grain exchange. The farmer always gambled on what he would get for a bushel of grain, oats, barley or whatever he produced. It was as though you would gamble with dice in a casino in Nevada. That is not the proper way to work. It is not a proper situation in which to put any human being. People need to know what their income will be so that they can plan their lives for themselves and their families. They have to have that kind of security. We, the citizens of Canada who are engaged in many occupations, want that kind of security so we can plan our own lives and futures. I suggest that that is not too much to ask for on behalf of the farmers of prairie Canada.

● (1120)

The motions now before the House would offer that kind of protection to the farmers. As we have argued for a long, long time, we of course would like to see the Crow rate remain intact and would like to see the powers of the Wheat Board expanded. However, we are not dealing with the expansion of the Wheat Board's powers in this particular motion but with preserving the kinds of powers it presently has.

I would like to make a direct appeal to my friend, the Hon. Member for Assiniboia. If his Motion No. 39 happens to fail, I would ask that he organize among his caucus unanimous support for Motion No. 40. I think I see him nodding his head in agreement. I hope that when the vote comes on Motion No. 40, all Conservative Members in the House will be present and will vote in support of Motion No. 40. Perhaps together we can persuade some of the more open-minded Liberal Members across the way such as the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Lumley) to support this motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, this motion is very important, and I would like to say to my colleagues from Quebec: We need your support for Motion No. 40. It is extremely important! As a member of the House for 15 years, I have often supported proposals by Quebec producers, by the Union des producteurs agricoles,