

Canadian Wheat Board Act

minister a few minutes ago we realize that there are many ramifications in connection with the shipment of wheat through Churchill.

Early this fall we were much concerned over what we heard and read about the boats coming into Churchill having no grain to take out on their return trips. After hearing the minister speak tonight I am beginning to see the reason why there was no grain at the terminal at Saskatoon. We are also very much interested in that elevator, and I am particularly because my farm is not far from it.

The marketing of grain is of much concern to us all and the minister has said that it must be got out quickly on demand. Possibly that has much to do with there being no grain in the terminal at Saskatoon. I am hoping that in the future, when the marketing of our grain is in a more stable position than at the present time, greater use will be made of this port. I do not intend to say much more about the shipping of our grain, but I should like to read a letter which I received since coming down here which refers to Churchill. This letter has nothing to do with wheat, but I think its contents are significant. It is addressed to myself and reads:

It is my intention to bring some pedigreed cattle over from Great Britain next summer. Would prefer to ship into the country via the port of Churchill on account of that port being about 1,200 miles closer to our point than Halifax, thereby saving a long rail haul and consequently larger cost for freight, et cetera. At present there are no quarantine facilities at Churchill nor stockyards either (these were removed during the war) and it would be necessary to have quarantine facilities arranged by the Department of Agriculture, health of animals branch. Dr. Childs of Ottawa, I believe, is the chief veterinarian in charge of this.

He goes on to say:

I have discussed this matter with the secretary of the On to the Bay Association who is in correspondence with Messrs. Dalgleish, the shipping firm of Newcastle, who, for the past several years, have been sending ships to Churchill for wheat, with a view to ascertaining rates, etc., for transportation.

That letter is signed by P. J. Ibbotson, of Radisson, Sask. He happens to be a breeder of purebred Shorthorn cattle in my constituency, and also a grain grower. Such a letter does bring it to our attention that possibly greater use should be made of the port of Churchill, not only for the shipping of grain from Canada, but also for the shipping of livestock and goods from Great Britain to different parts of Canada.

Mr. Robert Fair (Battle River): There seems to be a long drawn out argument as to the port of Churchill, but there is one bright spot in that argument in that the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) stated tonight that he is in favour of that port. I think if more of our men in positions of power were in favour of Churchill rather

than Montreal and other ports we would have a much greater advantage than we have been able to reap in the past. Many of the arguments of the minister have been based on present crop conditions, a short crop, and the fact that our contract with Great Britain expires at the end of July, 1950.

The people of northern Saskatchewan and others fairly close to the port of Churchill should be able to take advantage of it, and are entitled to some benefits on account of its existence. If it is not feasible to put the necessary changes into effect this year then action should be taken as soon as possible so that the people adjacent to that port can reap those benefits. I believe I had something to do with having the port of Vancouver amendment made in the Canadian Wheat Board Act. In my opinion, while we were entitled to have that change made, others are also entitled to have the port of Churchill used as a basic port.

Therefore, while the Minister of Trade and Commerce, as I said before, has based most of his arguments on the short crop this year and the fact that our contract with Great Britain expires next year, I feel that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) will have to get busy and see that we get more rain so that we can grow larger crops and use the port of Churchill as a storage port if for no other purpose. While he is doing that, the Minister of Trade and Commerce can see to it that we have a contract that will bring us beneficial results for the delivery of the wheat that we can produce provided we get the necessary rain.

Mr. J. J. Smith (Moose Mountain): I want to speak very briefly on this bill. The matter of how we sell our wheat interests the people of my constituency so that I do not hesitate to put in a word on the marketing of grain. Some hon. members have said that northern Saskatchewan would benefit greatly by the use of the Churchill route. I think that we can all agree on that; but, as has been stated by the minister, under our wheat agreement with Great Britain we have to market that grain this year.

As far as my constituency is concerned, I am not in favour of the bill in its present form because we in western Canada will have to pay the storage on that grain. I understand that under the world wheat agreement the price of wheat will go down a little each year. If the wheat has to be stored and we have to pay for the storage and also take a chance on the price going down, then I am not in favour of the bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Beaudoin): Order. If the hon. member for Melfort speaks now he will close the debate.

[Mr. Bater.]