

of moving quickly to protein grading. Even though they may not be sure the wheat they produce individually is high in protein, they know that if we can maintain and expand our wheat exports to these sophisticated and growing markets, our total wheat exports will increase and there will be more opportunities for the sale of their grain whether or not it be lower in protein, or barley, oats or rapeseed.

To suggest, as the hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski) did a short while ago, that there was no longer urgency in the matter of protein grading because the minister in charge of the Wheat Board has done such a good job in promoting grain sales, is unacceptable to the western farmers, to say the least. We cannot be complacent. We must cultivate all our markets to the maximum. There is no doubt that we must put ourselves in a position as soon as possible to supply wheat to meet the specifications of the growing number of countries which require high quality wheat. After all, this is our best and most reliable market.

Members of the Conservative party are doing their best to convey the false impression that somehow this bill is designed to radically reduce the number of grain elevators on the Prairies. The Board of Grain Commissioners has always had the power to license or not to license grain elevators. If the government had made up its mind about this matter, drastic steps could have been taken before now. The fact is that there is a study going on at the present time to determine what savings, if any, could be achieved through various types of grain handling and transportation systems.

When this study is completed, the information will be made public and the farmers and other people concerned will indicate whether they prefer to retain the present system or move more quickly toward another, and the government no doubt would be guided by their wishes. In the meantime, the grain handling system has not remained static. The grain companies have been doing a great deal of reorganization on their own. Dozens of elevators are being closed out each year and, through a process of exchanges between companies, regrouping is taking place making better utilization of our elevators and elevator operators. I expect that this sort of thing will continue and there will be no sudden and dramatic speeding up of this process. The point I want to make is that the movement toward a rationalization of our grain handling system is completely independent of this revision of the Canada Grain Act; it proceeded under the old act and could continue under it.

Most people will agree that the Canada Grain Act is due for a general revision. There has not been one for 40 years. There is no great change in the basic concepts of Bill C-175 from those enshrined in the old Canada Grain Act. One important thing that is new in Bill C-175, in addition to protein grading, is the provision which gives the Governor in Council power to regulate the supply and allocation of boxcars, which it does not now have. It seems to me this provision could be every bit as important and urgent at this time as protein grading.

Canada Grain Bill

If it is in order, Mr. Speaker, I should like to read three subclauses of clause 97 which deal with this matter. They are as follows:

The Governor in Council may by order, (a) where he considers it necessary in the public interest to do so, require a railway company to supply to and to place at any point at which the railway company supplies a service, railway cars for the carriage of grain;

(b) notwithstanding anything in this act or the *Canadian Wheat Board Act*, authorize and direct any minister of the Crown or any agency of the government of Canada to exercise the powers in respect of the allocation of available railway cars contained in any provision of this act, other than paragraph (a) of this section, or of the *Canadian Wheat Board Act*;

(c) direct that any allocation of railway cars be guided by the principle that the producer should have the right to select the elevator of his choice or to load directly—

All these are very important powers. Two of them are new and with the very heavy movement of grain anticipated in the next year or two I think these powers could be very useful. I suggest there are many reasons besides those I have enumerated for getting on with this bill and having it made part of the law as soon as possible. I offer my greatest co-operation to those who would assist in bringing this matter to a conclusion at the earliest possible date.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I wish to take very few minutes to comment not only on this bill but on what has been said by a few hon. members. First I wish to say that one aspect of the bill which the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Douglas) just mentioned, concerning the allocation of boxcars at the elevator of the farmer's choice, is something that members of this party and members of the official opposition were espousing on the Prairie provinces in the days prior to, and since, the Bracken commission. At long last a Liberal speaker has stood upon and advocated support for this provision. I have heard little mention of this matter from the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) or from any other government member; therefore, I was glad to hear the hon. member for Assiniboia speak on it. I hope the hon. member for Assiniboia, the Minister of Agriculture and other government members realize that if they in fact implement fully and completely this measure in the bill, the private grain elevators in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta will all be out of business.

If the government is prepared to go along with that proposal, it will have the full support of the New Democratic Party. If it is not prepared to go along with it, it should quit kidding the troops and the farmers, because there is no question that if boxcars are really allocated to the elevator of the farmer's choice, the United Grain Growers, the National Grain Company, the Pioneer Grain Company, Mr. Heffelfinger and all those who sit on the Canada Grains Council will be out of business. The government had better quit kidding the farmers and this Parliament.

Allocate boxcars to the elevator of the farmer's choice! I dare the hon. member for Assiniboia and the Minister of Agriculture to implement what this bill provides. Their colleague from Winnipeg, the Minister of Supply