

*Canada Grain Act*

to patronize the elevators of their choice was gone into at some length. It became clear that most of the witnesses felt that the paramount consideration was the marketing of our grain, and that nothing should be done to interfere with the maximum efficiency of that procedure. The wheat pools were in full agreement with that view. Also, there was no point whatever in loading box cars and sending them forward to fill up the terminals unless there was a chance of selling the grain. Therefore the authority which should have final control in the matter was the wheat board. Having sold certain grades and certain kinds of grain, they would order that grain to be shipped out in accordance with what they were able to dispose of.

My understanding of the way that worked was that the wheat board would give orders to the various elevator companies to ship out the grain which they required from those various companies. Of course there was the question of the proportion of shipping orders allotted to the different companies, and some questions were put to the wheat board as to the share that was being given to each company. The attitude taken toward those questions was that this was something the wheat board felt it was not in the interests of the growers of grain to have made public; that each company knew the proportion it was getting, but if it were made public it would become a matter of controversy. If the grain growers had the confidence in the wheat board that was expressed by every single member of our committee, confidence in their fairness and ability to do a good job, they should leave it to the wheat board to handle this matter as they considered fair.

It became quite clear that the grain companies did know the share of orders they were getting, and so far as I could see there was no real complaint about the share of orders that was being allotted to the various companies. However, the difficulty as put to us by the representatives of the Saskatchewan wheat pool in particular was that whereas the shipping orders, shall we say, of the Saskatchewan wheat pool might be quite a bit larger than those of some other company, the companies would allot those shipping orders to the various elevators throughout their system, and this might mean that in one certain spot a pool elevator would fill from that order twice the number of cars that some competing elevator might require.

It was also said that there was a tendency on the part of the railroads to spot one car at the pool elevator and one at the competing elevator, even though the pool might ultimately require twice that many cars to meet

the shipping order. The pool might not begin to get those extra box cars until the box cars had been fully supplied to the other elevator or elevators. They said that tended to throw out of line the allocation of the wheat board, because if they could not fill a proportion of the shipping orders, then of course as soon as space was created in each elevator company it tended to fill up, and the result was that the pool could not clear the grain proportionately as fast as the shipping orders it was given under the wheat board action.

The wheat board is the authority that has the power to allocate box cars, if it sees fit to do so. In view of the fact that the wheat board is the body that must control the marketing of grain, everybody agreed it was quite proper that it should have the legal power to actually allocate the box cars.

The question then arose, what is the best way to allocate the box cars? As I have stated, it was suggested that if the shipping orders were given in a proper proportion ultimately the box cars were bound to follow the shipping orders; but, as the wheat pool suggested, on account of the railroads tending to give one box car to each elevator—not always doing so, but tending to do so in many instances—the wheat board's allocation of the shipping orders was not being carried through to the shipper of grain.

The committee recommended what they suggested was the solution to that problem in the report they made to the house yesterday, which reads as follows:

Your committee was seized with the present necessity of wheat board shipping orders having overriding priority. This committee recommends that the wheat board allocation of shipping orders be carried through by the wheat board issuing instructions to the railways to spot box cars at elevators at each shipping point in proportion to the wheat board orders approved for that point.

We were told that the wheat board did exercise some supervision in regard to the allocation of cars as among different shipping points if it appeared that some shipping point was not being given fair consideration. It has been argued that this still does not meet the basic idea that the grower at each point should decide what proportion of box cars should be made available at that point; that, for example, for some reason or another, the wheat pool in allocating box cars at one particular point, while it might be getting over the whole system its proper share of box cars, at that point it might not get the share the shippers at that point want; and therefore the wheat board and the railroads should be bound to allocate box cars according to the wishes of the shippers at each point.