

*Western Grain Transportation Act*

We have a history that goes back 100 years, more or less, of effective operations with regard to the Wheat Board for as long as it goes back and as far back as the old Canada Grain Act goes. Suddenly to come up with a program that would give one person the power to second guess this most efficient, effective group and give that person the right to decide whether it was doing its job in conformity with what is in the best interests of the Canadian farmer and of Canada as a whole as we continue to find markets for our products—to give that individual, whose primary purpose as set out in the Bill is to guarantee that there will be a grain transportation system, and his or her two or three employees the right to—

**An Hon. Member:** Twenty-five or 30.

**Mr. Deans:** My colleague says 25 or 30 employees—to give that person and those employees a mandate to begin the process of interfering in the extremely good work of the Grain Commission and the Wheat Board, makes no sense at all. I do not know what it is the Conservatives are talking about. For the life of me I cannot understand why they continuously rise and mumble into their beards about some sort of overseeing capacity that is necessary. Not a soul in western Canada believes that. Why they would align themselves with the scourge of the West, the Liberal Party, on this matter—why they would choose to creep into the still warm bed they just got out of last week in order to appease the Liberals in their squeeze for the destruction of the entire farming community, is beyond comprehension.

● (1600)

When I see what is going on here, I must ask why the Conservatives are doing this. The Conservatives almost gained respectability in the last three weeks by moving toward the position we have been putting forward ever since the Bill was introduced. The Conservatives have been sitting on the fence since the introduction of this Bill, never quite sure what position to adopt. Finally they decided that they would like to see the entire matter delayed for three years, which I quite frankly feel is not long enough. But at least it showed that they were moving in the right direction. When confronted with a most reasonable proposal, which we are now offering and which has been consistent with our view of this Bill from its introduction, they suddenly decide to jump ship and leap back into the sinking boat of the Liberal Party. That is beyond my understanding. The 62 per cent in the Gallup poll has clearly gone to their heads.

**Mr. Flis:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) always speaks to the topic and remains relevant. I am amazed that today he seems to be straying completely away from Motions No. 36, No. 37 and No. 38. I suggest he would be more in order if he could explain to the House why Dennis McDermott, President of the Canadian Labour Congress, has asked his Party to end their attempts to delay this legislation.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Hon. Member will have an opportunity to enter debate. That is not a point of order. The Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain.

**Mr. Deans:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am grateful to you for putting him in his place. It would be better if he listened rather than spoke. I have been carefully setting out what we have been attempting to achieve. I wish to say that you well know, Mr. Speaker, that the President of the Canadian Labour Congress is in full support of our actions. What he did not understand was why the Government would not listen to reason. I also know that the President of the Canadian Labour Congress supports these sets of amendments in particular which we put forward. He stands four square behind us on these particular amendments.

What he is questioning, as I am today, is why the Government is so reluctant to accept these useful suggestions. We would like to complete this debate by putting forward a practical solution, and I will complete my part of it in two seconds. I suggest to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Flis) that one small step toward finding that practical solution would certainly be the acceptance of these three amendments.

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Mr. Speaker, I believe Motions No. 36, No. 37 and No. 38 are very important in terms of curtailing the power of the Administrator of the Senior Grain Transportation Committee. I would rather see more power given to the farmers, their organizations and the Wheat Pools of this country through the Canadian Wheat Board. These organizations are very important indeed.

The three motions before us today seek to amend Clause 18 of Bill C-155. That clause defines the duties and functions of the Administrator. The Government opposite is attempting through this legislation to give considerable power to the Administrator of the Senior Grain Transportation Committee. One of those powers will be the authority to impose sanctions on participants in the grain transportation and hauling system in this country. The clause goes into considerable detail about the type of power the Administrator would have. It also allows the Administrator to make forecasts in the movement of grain and to ensure that all the participants in that system act appropriately. The Administrator will monitor not only the railway system but the other participants in the grain handling system as well. It seems to me that giving the Administrator so much power means that we are setting up another level of bureaucracy that will compete with other Government institutions which already exist. Therefore, one must ask, which institution will have the final say in various matters?

According to Clause 18, the Senior Grain Transportation Committee and the Administrator come under the authority of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy). However, the Administrator will have the power to impose sanctions on the Canadian Wheat Board for which there is a Minister responsible. Presently, the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board is Senator Hazen Argue, who does not sit in this House but in the Senate. Therefore the Administrator who is