

Private Members' Business

the taxpayers of Canada who have to pay the shot. I frankly very much doubt if the positions expressed by the president of the pool is in keeping with that of the majority of the individual members.

The *Country Guide* in May 1987 summed the matter up in an editorial headed "Grain must keep moving". In referring to a particular strike or stoppage at that time, it stated, and I quote:

This doesn't have to happen. Since everyone is pre-programmed for the government to step in anyway, it makes sense for that intervention to take place before grain movement is disrupted or even threatened with disruption.

The editorial goes on to say:

No one likes to restrict freedom of action by any group. But the accidents of geography, history, economics, and politics have combined to place prairie farmers at the mercy of a handful of individuals who can cut off access to grain and oilseed markets. The balance of power is too one-sided. In the minds of reasonable people, a strike that disrupts grain movement this year is unthinkable. The government must make sure that reason prevails and the unthinkable doesn't come to pass.

I believe that most prairie producers would find themselves in complete agreement with the editorial as expressed by the *Country Guide* three and a half years ago, but just as valid and poignant today.

In canvassing this situation, I have relied on the viewpoint of individual producers in my area of Saskatchewan and across western Canada who tell me that they are deeply disturbed by this process which seems to go on and on.

I recall dealing with Thunder Bay, the maintenance of ports act in the fall of 1986. In the summer of 1987 we were called back here for the Maintenance of Railway Operations Act. In early 1988 it was Prince Rupert, the grain handling operations there. In the latter part of 1989 it was legislation which sent the seaway workers back to work again.

I am not here to comment on who was right and who was wrong, but we do know who pays the price. The question then is when the collective bargaining process breaks down, what are we going to do? Are we going to continue to allow the grain producers of this country to pay the shot? The whole process seems to me to be

embarrassing. It is costly, unfair, and is simply not in keeping with the structure of modern day society.

We have sophistication in the hospitals. We have all sorts of operations to transplant. We can put people in space with all sorts of sophisticated techniques, and yet the method of resolving problems, the labour-management process, date back literally to the stone age.

The hon. member says perhaps this is not the answer. Maybe it is not. I am not pretending that it is. I am simply asking, can we not in this place refer it to a committee for some study? Perhaps we can find out what they do in other jurisdictions. Maybe it is the same thing. If it is, I will hold my peace. But, I urge members on all sides to not talk this out but rather to consider at least searching for some other alternatives.

I see that my time is almost up, and so what I am going to do at this point is ask whether in this House there would be unanimous consent for me to withdraw this bill and, in fact, refer the subject matter to the appropriate committee which, in this case, might well be the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

I wonder if I could have the agreement of members in this House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I am afraid there is not unanimous consent.

The hon. member has 30 seconds left in his speech.

Mr. Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, in the brief bit of time left to me, let me just say that I am rather disappointed but not surprised. It is pretty clear that the interests of big labour and big business on the one side and the prairie farmer on the other really cannot exist under the same roof. Their interests are very much opposed.

I had hoped we might be able to seek out a solution in this place. It appears that that time has not yet come. I am disappointed particularly with members of the New Democratic Party. Many of them come from the prairies. They come from Saskatchewan. They pretend on the weekends to be in support of the prairie grain producer. On Monday morning, they come back into this place and bow to the dictates of big labour. It is extremely disappointing.