

Canada Grain Act

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five Members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Pursuant to Standing Order 13(5) the recorded division on the proposed motion stands deferred until six o'clock p.m. Monday, July 11, 1988.

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CANADA GRAIN ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (for Mr. Mayer) moved that Bill C-112, an Act to amend the Canada Grain Act and other Acts in consequence thereof, be now read the second time and, by unanimous consent, referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I was hoping the Parliamentary Secretary would speak, but this Bill tends to be a technical Bill and deals with a number of matters relating to the Canada Grain Act and things such as grading, documentation, definitions, and such things as, for example, changing the designation of chemists to that of scientists. It creates some new grades for wheat and a number of other changes like that. However, as we understand it, the secret reason for bringing this legislation before the House is to provide a seven-year tenure for the three members of the Grain Commission. We are concerned about this because it not only provides tenure at pleasure, but also provides for a five-year tenure for assistant grain commissioners. We are concerned that this might lead to the Government using it for political patronage purposes.

In the February 18 edition of the *Manitoba Co-Operator* it was reported that this was going to happen. The Government was planning to bring this legislation in to provide tenure so that the Hon. Member for Lisgar (Mr. Murta) can be appointed to the Canadian Grain Commission.

Whether or not that is true we are not sure, but that is what is reported in the *Manitoba Co-Operator*. The article says that the Hon. Member refused to be appointed to the Grain Commission because there was no tenure. The deal was then struck between the Minister responsible for grains and oilseeds to get a seven-year tenure for commissioners by changing the Act. That is the part of this Bill which we object to. We think that doing this is not necessarily in the best interests of the country.

The article points out that if the Hon. Member for Lisgar was appointed to the commission, the present commissioner would be moved over to the Canadian Wheat Board. I think we should ask the Government to withdraw these provisions

which are of a purely partisan nature and which would change the commission from a non-partisan regulatory body . . .

Mr. Clark (Brandon—Souris): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. We were hoping we could go to committee and these questions could be answered in detail there because there are answers. Grain commissioners used to have a term of ten years in the 1970s, if I recall correctly. The legislation was then amended so that the term was at the pleasure of the Minister. It is now suggested that it be seven years.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It is my understanding that the Hon. Member for Algoma was going to suggest that we not see the clock.

Mr. Foster: Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to see the Bill go to committee if we can avoid seeing the clock for another 10 or 20 minutes. Otherwise, I would rather see the Bill come back and we will finish it on Monday.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): We have Private Members' Hour coming up. Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Axworthy: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I am quite prepared, if there is unanimous consent, to give another 15 minutes to the Bill. I want to reserve my right to speak for a few minutes because there are a number of things here that I think are important and I want to speak to them on second reading.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, I am quite prepared to agree to the request of the Hon. Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) that more time be given to this Bill so that it may go to committee. However, I do so on the understanding that the additional time would not be taken from the important motion standing in the name of the Hon. Member for Yukon (Ms. McLaughlin) and that we continue with the normal amount of time for that debate. This is a vital question relating to the North, and the North is much too neglected anyway to shortchange it this afternoon.

Mr. Grisé: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker. We are prepared to extend debate on Bill C-112 for 15 minutes if we have unanimous consent that after that time this Bill will be referred to committee. After that, of course, you will allow the full one hour for debate on the motion of the Hon. Member for Yukon.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Do I have unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Foster: Mr. Speaker, our concerns are that this legislation is being changed as the result of a direct political arrangement worked out between the Minister of State (Grains and Oilseeds) (Mr. Mayer) and the Hon. Member for Lisgar. The Bill changes the present arrangement where