

*Canadian Wheat Board Act (No. 2)*

● (1130)

[Translation]

**Mr. C.-A. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, just a few words to say that we are in favour of the motion before the House because, to my mind, it is the very essence of logic that farmers should be represented on their board, the Canadian Wheat Board. A while ago, the speaker who preceded me said that the producers could sit on the advisory committee. Even if all the members of that committee were farmers, they would not have enough influence or power to get their wishes implemented. The farmers must be represented above all on the board of administration.

On the Canadian Dairy Commission, for instance, we should have no one but dairy producers, not only civil servants who have never seen a cow. I think we would then have far more fairness. Today, the same problem seems to exist out west with regard to the Canadian Wheat Board. There are not enough wheat producers, real farmers, interested in the Board to guide the orientation of the government policy. We should get back to basics, give everyone his responsibilities, especially those who are interested in the industry, that is farming, whether it be in dairy production or grain farming. I feel we would then have much more fairness, and a much better agricultural policy in Canada. I suggest we rely far too much on experts. A while ago, I heard the representative of the NDP say that we need experts. When we need lawyers, we will get them—and this will surprise him—from farming circles because, yes, some farmers have sons who are lawyers. There are good lawyers, capable of sticking up for the farmers, without having to get them from the ranks of city dwellers who know nothing about farming the land.

I believe that is the idea the mover had in mind, and I can assure him that we are in favour of his motion. Indeed, we are in favour of all motions that will give back to the farmers the power in their respective fields of endeavour, and put a stop to the administration of that specific field by strangers.

[English]

**Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie):** Mr. Speaker, when I first entered the House I was somewhat hesitant to participate in this debate because I felt that the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Neil) would adequately represent the point of view I hold on this matter. However, after reflecting on what went on in the committee and after listening to the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin), I feel that I must raise a few points.

First, let me deal with what went on in the committee. The minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board during the presentation of this particular amendment by the hon. member for Moose Jaw spoke very highly in favour of the suggestion; he thought it was a very valid suggestion. However, it seems that he instructed his supporters in the committee to vote against it. I understand why many of them would not support a motion like this; they do not know very much about the operation of the Canadian Wheat Board because many of them are not representatives from western Canada.

Perhaps the hon. members from eastern Canada should be excused, but I certainly cannot excuse the hon. member

[Mr. Benjamin.]

for Regina-Lake Centre, who apparently represents a western constituency. I can understand why he would not want to have a producer advising the Canadian Wheat Board because he himself is not a producer. He does not know what it is like to be represented by some so-called expert from out of town. It seems that once you are from out of town, you become an expert, and you can tell everyone how to run his business. Personally, I have experience in operating a farm. I also know what it is like to be away from the operation. There is no better way to obtain knowledge than by practical on-the-spot experience.

The hon. member argues in favour of people like Mr. Turner, capable as he may be, but he already has a forum. There is the wheat pool. There is already a paper in which producers can put forward their points of view. Mr. Atkinson, the head of the farm union, already has a forum in which to speak. Why do we want someone who we know holds a particular point of view to become a member of a board and advise the Canadian Wheat Board?

I was very much surprised by the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre. I can remember the time when the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board made an appointment to that board, and that person was from Ottawa. Without mentioning the name, I think anyone who knows the operation of the Wheat Board knows whom I am talking about. However, I know the criticism the hon. member levelled at that time. He said that was a political appointment and that it was not an appointment which was in the best interests of farmers.

Remembering all those things and having just listened to the hon. member, I was somewhat provoked into participating in this debate, in order to point out the hypocrisy of some of the comments which come from that quarter, for no other reason than it seems they may have somebody in mind themselves.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Korchinski:** I can understand that they may want a particular point of view expressed. I know that the hon. member has had leanings toward the farm union, and in many instances the farm union does represent a particular point of view. It has divorced itself from the operation of, say, the agrabusiness. There we have two farm organizations taking opposing points of view.

I know that many times in politics we find ourselves in a position where we are perhaps not strongly in favour of a proposal, but because it is a caucus decision, we go along with it. It is obvious that anyone who belongs to any organization and anyone who is not a practical farmer is going to hold the view of that organization unless and until such a time as his organization points out to him that he can take a different point of view.

There is great merit in the recommendation put forward by the hon. member for Moose Jaw, and I rose only because I know what happened in committee. The minister wanted to be on both sides. He argued on one side of the question, that is, in favour of the suggestion, but then he turned around and instructed his supporters to vote in opposition. Here we have an hon. member who in the past strongly advocated proper representation. Now, he has an opportunity to demonstrate his feelings and put his money where his mouth is, and he talks against this measure.