

Canadian Livestock Feed Board

leaving no balance of cost for the producer. This is what we have called equalization. It is an equalization or elimination of transportation costs so that the normal cost of feed would be the same as if the feed had been purchased at Port Arthur. The location of the buyer had no relation to the cost because transportation costs were eliminated.

Mr. Pugh: If you eliminated transportation costs, and I take it that means handling costs and storage costs, the grain sold to feeders in British Columbia could be purchased at exactly the same price as if it had been purchased on the prairies at Calgary, Winnipeg, Regina or any other city. Is that the intention? I want to know whether that is the intention of the government when they speak of equalization.

Mr. Sauvé: No, because there was an amendment to the Canadian Wheat Board Act that allows provincial trading in grain; so that the cost of feed in the western provinces is much lower than the cost of feed outside the three prairie provinces. I cannot hope to equalize the cost of feed in eastern Canada or British Columbia with the cost of feed inside the three prairie provinces. There is no possibility of that at all.

• (5:10 p.m.)

Mr. Pugh: The minister says that there is no possibility of arriving at such a solution? I am only thinking of the spirit of competition, and the plight of the poultry producers in British Columbia who are at a decided disadvantage, when one considers those on the prairies.

As I read the act, the board may, in furtherance of its objects, (a) make—

—(i) payments related to the cost of feed grain storage in Eastern Canada, and

(ii) payments related to the cost of feed grain transportation.

Thus, the payments made would not be the full cost of transportation or the full cost of storage. This would be so within the province of British Columbia, and would apply to the moving of grain to British Columbia, I take it.

Mr. Sauvé: Under this act we should not do anything different from what we are now doing, because we are paying the cost of transportation, as defined by the administrative regulations concerned. There is some definition of what transportation costs mean, and we are limited to that. We cannot do

more than that, and we cannot give an additional subsidy to equalize the cost of feed in all provinces of Canada. For example, a British Columbia feeder has the advantage of being nearer the large centres in British Columbia than would be a feeder in Alberta or Saskatchewan. That accounts for the better competitive position in which the British Columbia feeder finds himself.

Mr. Olson: I am apprehensive about clause 7 (2) (c). I refer to the words, at the top of page 5, reading:

—and for the purposes of any such inquiry or investigation, empower the board or any of the members thereof to exercise the powers of a person appointed as a commissioner under Part I of the Inquiries Act.

If this is to be a permanent authority, granted to each of the board members, it seems to me that we are giving them authority to conduct an investigation. I believe that almost always in the past—and I am not sure that I am entirely correct in this—whenever an investigation has been ordered under the Inquiries Act, the matter has been of a specific nature, and has been of such magnitude that it has gained the attention of parliament, which has ordered such an inquiry.

I am apprehensive about this much authority being permitted, on a permanent basis, to every member of the board. I wonder if the minister would explain why this wording is included in the clause?

Mr. Sauvé: I think the hon. member will find similar wording in the Canadian Wheat Board Act. The wording is related to part 1 of the Inquiries Act, and it is very limited in scope. I do not have part 1 of the Inquiries Act with me, but there are some limitations in it. This power was included in the bill, because it is given to some other boards. As I say, I do not have the Inquiries Act with me, and I do not know whether this will create any major difficulties. At the moment I am unable to stress the differences between this bill, and acts relating to similar boards.

Mr. Danforth: I, too, am concerned about clause 7 (2) (c). Does not this wording, in effect, under part 1 of the Inquiries Act, empower anyone designated by this board, or any one of its members, to regulate any company or individual engaged in this particular segment of the grain trade, or to order such individual or company to make available all records and books pertaining to the business that such individual or company is engaged in?