

*Canadian Wheat Board Act*

in any way to carry out the government's wheat programme, which it is seeking to implement by this bill.

Mr. GREEN: What about the other amendments?

Mr. MacKINNON: The other amendments are minor in character, largely verbal changes. "His bank" is changed to "any bank". The word "the" is dropped and "to that extent" is added after "shall".

Mr. GREEN: What about the one in lines 39 and 40?

Mr. MacKINNON: The amendment is to delete the words "and allowances authorized by the board" and substitute "allowances and costs provided for in such agreement". The chairman and the solicitor of the Canadian wheat board advised that this was not giving any additional security beyond what the act provided, but it was the wish of the people concerned to put in these additional words and the solicitor for the board saw no reason why that should not be done.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): I had not seen or heard of these amendments until the dinner hour but, looking over them, I am inclined to agree with them for this reason. I did not favour the compulsory features from 1950 on. I can see that if conditions were bad the government might have to set a price for wheat only half of what it is now and they would have power to do that but for this amendment. The solicitor for the wheat board is reported in the press as having said that the real concern of the wheat board is the maintenance of the five-year pool rather than filling export quotas to Britain. I understood that the whole reason for this amendment to the wheat board act was to fill the quotas to Britain; that that was the principal reason for this legislation. I have read at length the report of the solicitor to the wheat board, and he has given his opinion that the Canada-United Kingdom wheat agreement should be considered in the form of a general treaty rather than an agreement; that there is no harm if they fall down on fulfilling an agreement. He says that the whole object is the maintenance of the five-year pool rather than the filling of the quotas to Britain. Does the minister confirm that statement?

Mr. MacKINNON: No, that is not my understanding at all. The object of the legislation is twofold. It is to enable the wheat board to carry out the agreement that has been made for the sale to the United Kingdom, and, on the other hand, to provide for

[Mr. MacKinnon.]

the payment to the producer of wheat of a guaranteed price, plus participation certificates, for a period of five years.

Mr. WRIGHT: What is the import of the amendment on page 15, lines 15 and 16, which deletes the words "directed by the board". Does that take away from the board the power to direct delivery of the wheat to a particular terminal?

Mr. MacKINNON: The solicitor and the chairman of the board agree that this will in no way interfere with the powers they have now.

Mr. WRIGHT: I should like to say a few words with regard to the first amendment. I think the argument advanced by the hon. member for Souris (Mr. Ross) is fairly sound; but I would point out that there are some objections to this amendment. We are trying today to get an international multilateral agreement on wheat. The efforts have not been too successful so far, but we still have hopes that such an agreement can be negotiated. If it is negotiated it will probably extend for a five-year period from the time the agreement is reached, and in all probability the international agreement would extend until 1952 or 1953. So if we accept this amendment and it stays in the act until 1950 it would mean that we would be curtailing the powers of the board to fulfil any multilateral agreement to assemble and deliver grain under that agreement. In 1950 it takes from the board the powers which we in western Canada have for a number of years been trying to give to the board, that is the power to maintain orderly marketing in western Canada. It also takes from the board the power to maintain orderly marketing in the fall of the year so that our growers may have a quota. In that respect the amendment is a serious matter. This is something which we have fought for in western Canada, but now in 1950 we are putting the onus on the growers of western Canada to come back again and fight to have this power put back in the act at that time. We should realize just what we are doing by this amendment which is a serious one.

Mr. QUELCH: My first reaction to the amendment when I read it was one of opposition, but, on the other hand, I realize that part IV and part III expire because the government guarantees the price only to July, 1950, and the price will have to be reset at that time. While I still stand solidly behind the idea of the wheat board being a marketing agency, nevertheless I would be bitterly opposed to compelling the farmer to sell to an