

Canadian Wheat Board Act

farmers are without the means of storing grain on their farms.

I understand there has been a change at the ports, and if the minister is responsible for it then it is only proper that he should be congratulated. In conversation with people at the port of Vancouver I found out that they are now leaving cars in blocks of 50. The track will also be able to switch-out the cars. They move the cars in and change the waybills at a later date. Why could this not have been done earlier? All it will require is putting the grain in, unloading that particular grade of grain and exchanging the waybills or bills of lading. If we had used this method in the past two or three years we could have unloaded a great many more bushels of grain. I hope that this type of operation at the port of Vancouver will prove to be successful. I understand it will be a success. I hope the government will provide more storage at Vancouver and other ports, because it is absolutely necessary.

● (9:10 p.m.)

Some of us think that the powers of the Canadian Wheat Board should be widened to give the board jurisdiction not over Canadian grain but over the operation of all grain handling facilities. These should come under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board. This is necessary if the board is to operate successfully in this day and age. We think that the cost of storing all grains should be paid by the federal government. Under this legislation, under previous legislation and under legislation still to be introduced—here it is hard to say which came first, the chicken or the egg—the farmer will still get the thin end of the wedge.

We do not hesitate in saying that the Canadian Wheat Board can do a good job in this area. The Wheat Board is facing difficulties because we are telling them, "You must do the job," at the same time we are telling international brokerage firms, "You do the job." As one speaker said, some of these firms also have an interest in shipping companies. In no way, I suggest, is it possible for international brokerage firms with an interest in shipping companies to be greatly concerned about the shipment of Canadian wheat. They will ship from the countries where their ships are at berth.

Therein lies one of the problems still facing our agricultural economy. It affects the orderly marketing and movement of grains from our shores. The international brokerage firms want their cut of the farmer's income. They want to make sure they get their slice of the pie. They have an interest in ships, and they sell grain to various countries. I assure you that if a ship belonging to an international brokerage firm were in Australia, the firm would rather fill that ship with Australian grain than send it empty to Canada in order to move our grain to Japan or wherever it may be.

As I say, this is one of the great problems besetting our agricultural economy. I hope the minister will look at the situation and make sure that if the Canadian Wheat Board is to do a job in this area it is given the tools with which to do it. Let us not give somebody else a slice of the pie in that manner. If we are truly concerned about

[Mr. Skoberg.]

this situation we must make sure that there is complete and orderly marketing of the kind that has been referred to. That involves, of course, the selling of grain, the placing of fresh grains out on futures and the handling of grains by international brokerage firms. Also, the Canadian Wheat Board must be responsible for the full operation of the western prairie producer.

Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, I rise merely to ask a couple of questions about Bill C-238. I notice that it is designed to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act. Actually, there are two amendments in the bill. The first had to do with the grading of grain and the other with the inclusion of rapeseed, and so on, under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board. Many hon. members have talked about this matter.

Mr. Benjamin: Is the hon. member in favour of that, or not?

Mr. McIntosh: I will tell the hon. member that I am not in favour of his party; that is certain.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McIntosh: The people on my left speak one way here, and when they go out to the Prairies they speak differently. I am not afraid to take up the challenge thrown out tonight by the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Skoberg). I will certainly challenge the Wheat Board if they are not doing the job. I have been doing that ever since I came here. The one job they are not doing today is selling grain.

Mr. Benjamin: Why does the hon. member say that?

Mr. McIntosh: I will tell the hon. member why.

Mr. Benjamin: I think I know why.

Mr. McIntosh: No, the hon. member does not. They are not selling grain.

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question. Does the hon. member appreciate that this year their total sales of Canadian grain may achieve a record?

Mr. McIntosh: Yes.

Mr. Horner: Is it "may" or "shall"?

Mr. McIntosh: I am very pleased that the minister asked me that question. I had intended referring to some of his statements along that line. I was amazed when he rose in the House while another hon. member was dealing with this matter and said that this year there have been record sales of grain. May I ask the minister a question? Is he aware of present economic conditions on the Prairies? I say that if this is the best we can do, with conditions as serious as they are on the Prairies something must be drastically wrong with this government's program.

Let me repeat something I said about the government's agricultural program. Its entire agricultural program is