

Adjournment Debate

competency. However, it is important to note that implementing recommendations 6 to 11 made by Mr. Symons would promote considerably the creation of an appropriate review body within the university context. Recommendations 6 to 11 inclusive, such as the proposal for establishing university-wide appointments review committees, are in line with the Commission's policy on foreign professors. In fact, the standards they would impose on universities are stricter than those presently in effect or being considered by the Commission as part of its policy.

The recommendation for establishing a Canadian Centre falls under the jurisdiction of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada. We feel it would be necessary to proceed with thorough consultations with the provinces before judging the merits of a Centre of this kind. We would also need the assurance that establishing such a Centre would constitute a positive contribution by providing more information, not only on the field of education but also on the important links that exist between the world of education and the labour market. The idea of forecasts is, however, a valid one and some work has already been done in this respect. In fact, in order to provide for more extensive discussion on the immigration policy for foreign professors, the Commission is now discussing with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada the feasibility of establishing a database in this field that would be mutually acceptable.

While listening to the Hon. Member's comments, I was wondering whether he agrees that immigrants who have the qualifications may teach here in Canada. He will have to make himself clear, since from the comments I heard, I am not sure whether the Hon. Member is agreeable to qualified immigrants and also new Canadians obtaining these jobs, but especially immigrants.

[English]

WESTERN GRAIN TRANSPORTATION ACT—RATES CHARGED ON CONTAINER SHIPMENTS OF ALFALFA PELLETS. (B) RAILWAYS' INTERPRETATION OF ACT'S PROVISIONS

Mr. Bert Hargrave (Medicine Hat): Mr. Speaker, the question I am bringing forward to the adjournment debate tonight was asked last Friday, January 20, 1984. It is to be found at page 591 of *Hansard*. My question deals with the application of the new railway freight rates now in place since the beginning of this year, January 1, 1984. These, of course, were the rates that emerged after the lengthy Crow rate debate on Bill C-155 last year.

The point of my question is that the products of alfalfa in the form of meal, pellets or cubes do qualify for the new rail freight rates beginning this year. There was unanimous agreement for this during the committee stage of the long Crow debate. I should point out that prior to these new grain freight rates, alfalfa products shipped by rail had to be shipped at the full commercial rate. Such products had not been eligible for the lower statutory Crow rates prior to the C-155 legislation.

The problem is that both railways began a new era of railway rates this year by continuing the full commercial rates for these alfalfa products.

• (1820)

Here are some background details of this problem that developed in my own constituency of Medicine Hat. Alfalfa forage is a major irrigated crop on the intensive irrigation districts throughout most of southern Alberta. In the form of traditional hay, alfalfa is too bulky to move to any markets except those that are very close and local. However, in the form of dehydrated meal, pellets or cubes loaded into the new containers, such products can be and are being shipped to Japan. More recently a potential for shipment to the Korean market has developed.

Tirol Dehydrators Ltd. of Tilley, Alberta, are presently operating two plants within the Eastern Irrigation District centred around Brooks, Alberta. They have been producing mostly dehydrated alfalfa cubes over the last eight years. Last year they exported 30,000 tonnes to Japan, supplying about 10 per cent of Japan's total requirements of 375,000 tonnes. Tirol tried to use hopper cars for shipping to tidewater but found them to be quite unsatisfactory. It is successfully using 20-foot or 40-foot containers that are available and moving empty on a backhaul from eastern Canada west to Vancouver and Seattle. Last year this plant exported some 1,500 containers to Japan to a ready market that has a potential to further expand to 500,000 tonnes annually. That might take a few years but it is the potential.

The Tirol people have emphasized that the key to the success of the whole enterprise is freight rates. It is absolutely essential that the end product of alfalfa shipped by rail in containers be eligible for the new Crow Rate structure, and not be moved under the higher commercial rates.

I very much appreciated the prompt and favourable response to my question of last Friday given by the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy). I wish to acknowledge the quick action of the Canadian Transport Commission as well in contacting both railways and requiring them to cease charging the higher rates as explained in Section 50 of the new grain transportation act and further, in requiring the railways to make immediate refunds of any excessive freight charges. Tirol Dehydrators Ltd. sees an opportunity to double their export production in the near future provided that railway freight rates are reasonable and competitive.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Parliamentary Secretary to convey my genuine appreciation for the very prompt action the Minister took immediately after my question of last Friday, not only in his own Department, but in alerting the Canadian Transport Commission about this issue.

Mr. Jean-Guy Dubois (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to respond to the question of the Hon. Member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Hargrave). Having regard to his statement that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy) took prompt