

*Western Grain Transportation Act*

Administrator shall not restrict the powers of the Canadian Wheat Board under Section 21(k) of the Canadian Wheat Board Act, or any Order in Council, to make available the quantities and types of grain needed to achieve sales commitments.

The Canadian Wheat Board argued before the committee that the most efficient way to ensure future export sales is to ensure that the Board retains the ability to co-ordinate fully the grain transportation system. I think he is right.

Under Section 21(k) of the Canadian Wheat Board Act, the Board is allowed, subject only to Order in Council, to provide for the allocation of railway cars available for the shipment of grain at any delivery point to any elevator, loading platform or person at the delivery point.

That is a very important authority for the Wheat Board. Without control of the quota system and in the allocation of cars, the Wheat Board loses its capacity to complete its sales. We cannot arbitrarily separate the transportation of those grain sales from the sales themselves. As the Wheat Board told the committee:

Any further reduction in the Board's ability to co-ordinate transportation will be a very important step backward for the export sales program for western Canadian grains.

Clearly any transfer of authority to operate the bloc shipping system from the Wheat Board to the Administrator of the Senior Grain Transportation Committee would result not only in major problems for the efficiency of the transportation system but also for the effectiveness of the Wheat Board's sales efforts. I am a little distressed that this Bill was not amended in committee to take account of this problem. I know my colleague from Regina West tried repeatedly to have the Bill amended to take account of the Wheat Board's concerns.

It seems odd that when the Bill was drafted that little effort was made to address the concern of the Wheat Board to prevent a future shift in authority from the Board to the Senior Grain Commission by Order in Council. Since the ability of the Board, subject to Order in Council, to co-ordinate transportation of its grain sales is so important to its export grain sales, why was provision not made for the protection of the authority in this Bill? When it was raised repeatedly, why did the Government Members on the committee shy away from making the necessary changes? What is the reason for their reluctance to protect the authority of the Wheat Board? It makes little sense to me.

This amendment is not a major change to the Government's legislation. It only seeks to limit the authority of the Grain Transportation Administrator in a way that is reasonable and, I might add, fair. Without this amendment, only the elevator system and the actual buying and selling of grain would remain outside of the Administrator's control. Is it the intention of the Government to establish a czar over the transportation of western grain? I certainly hope not.

This amendment will ensure that the Wheat Board retains the power to order the direct grain cars in a way that allows it to fulfil its mandate and meet export sales. It would ensure the Wheat Board's ability to retain control over the bloc system of

shipping necessary for the export sales of western Canadian grains.

Let me close by saying that we should accept Motion No. 40. I do not say that because it is an NDP amendment. I say that because it does not confuse the Bill, as I must say Motion No. 39 does. As Motion No. 39 now reads, it will replace subclause 19(2) of the Bill. By doing that it would remove the protection written into this Bill now for the Canadian Grain Commission. I do not think that was the intent of the Hon. Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Gustafson). However, whether that was the intent or not, that would be the result.

Motion No. 40 does not replace subclause (2) which deals with the Grain Commission. Rather, it replaces subclause (3) which attempts to deal with the Wheat Board. If we are trying to improve the protection for the Wheat Board, we should be amending the clause that deals with the Wheat Board.

While both Motions Nos. 39 and 40 set out to preserve the authority of the Wheat Board, it is evident that it is Motion No. 40 that we should put forth.

**Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher):** Mr. Speaker, I want to add my support to Motion No. 39 standing in the name of the Hon. Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Gustafson). I support it because it makes sense. It makes sense if one understands in any way what has happened in the Prairies in the movement of grain and what farmers have been doing in order that some cash flow will allow them to continue business. That is the reason for the motion.

It is just amazing to watch the NDP grasping with their fingernails in desperation, trying somehow to show that whatever they are doing, they are in favour of the status quo on the Prairies.

**Mr. Blaikie:** Status Crow.

**Mr. Epp:** Not only that, but time has passed them by. What about credibility? Where is it? At 14 per cent even they are not crowing any more.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** They are the Titanic of western Canadian political Parties.

**Mr. Epp:** What about the Parliamentary Secretary? Let us look at him, if we can bear the sight for a moment. Obviously the question has been very clearly established by the Government, namely, that it wants closure on this Bill. It does not want to study the Bill any more. It wants to impose high rates of transportation costs on the farmers of western Canada. That is what it wants to do.

The Government would almost have been able to do that today through a parliamentary manoeuvre had the Parliamentary Secretary only followed the script that he was given a little more closely, but I guess he missed it.

**Mr. Flis:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is very clear that the Hon. Member never listens in this Chamber because I did not ask for any time allocation. I wanted to give