

Canadian Livestock Feed Board

there is a deficiency in that the board is not required to take any cognizance of the effect of its policies on the growing of feed grain in eastern Canada. At least, I draw that conclusion in reading this clause.

So long as feeders have a guarantee that feed grain will be available, that there is sufficient storage space to meet their needs and that there is a reasonable stability of price in eastern Canada and in British Columbia, with a fair equalization of price in both places, then the responsibilities of the board are satisfied. I can visualize a situation, however, where in that limited sense the board might be functioning efficiently but causing a detrimental effect to agriculture in eastern Canada. Perhaps this clause should be amended or the minister should at least give his assurance that the board will understand that it is to meet these obligations in a way which will not be detrimental to the economic welfare of eastern agriculture in its entirety.

Mr. Sauv : I think this is clearly implied by the wording of clause 5. The hon. member will notice that we do not qualify the origin of the feed grain. I think the objection he has mentioned, the problem he raised earlier on second reading and the problem raised by the hon. member for Kent (Ont.) are generally answered by clause 5 dealing with the objects of the board. Certainly that was the clear understanding and intention we had when this legislation was being drafted.

Mr. MacLean (Queens): I think the minister for that assurance. I mention these facts because to the average Canadian feed grain means western feed grain. The impression has certainly been in the minds of feeders in eastern Canada that western Canada is the only real source of supply. That is not the case.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Laprise: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister whether we can expect consultations between the livestock feed board and the authorities of the eastern provinces and British Columbia as well as representatives of producers in order to establish the needs of each area concerning feed grain?

Mr. Sauv : Mr. Chairman, it is the normal responsibility of a feed grain board to cooperate with all concerned to make sure that there will always be enough grain to feed livestock, as defined in the bill.

[*English*]

Mr. Keays: Mr. Chairman, I am sure the minister agrees that agriculture in the lower St. Lawrence area will become more successful as a result of the studies carried out by the Eastern Quebec Planning Board. In view of that, and in view of the fact that the climate there does present some drastic difficulties to the agricultural industry, can the minister tell us whether there have been any determinations made as to the location of storage facilities? He did say some time ago that agreements were being made at this time to transport feed grain by rail. Does he not think that in respect of some of these areas it would be possible to create a lower price if the grain were shipped by water? Does the government intend to acquire land for storage facilities?

Mr. Sauv : It is the function of the board to decide what is best under the conditions the hon. member has mentioned. The bill provides for the acquisition of land and for the building of storage facilities, but generally speaking I think we must accept the fact that the building of storage facilities at various locations throughout the countryside would add to the cost of feed grain to the farmer. Negotiations are being conducted now between the millers and the railroad companies which might solve at least in part the storage problems referred to earlier. In any case, the board will have the authority to acquire land and will make decisions in respect of problems such as the hon. member has raised. It will be for the board to examine local and regional situations as they develop.

Mr. Schreyer: In carrying out its obligations and duties under clause 5 of the bill, will the board be able to purchase feed grain directly from western points or from the Wheat Board? Is it conceivable that the board could engage in direct purchase or acquisition of feed grain—I do not think the minister has elaborated on this point—or is it intended that the board will function by dealing with brokers and distributors in the trade? Perhaps it will operate by doing both.

Mr. Sauv : If and when the board decides to engage in the buying and selling of grain it will act as a broker and will buy grain on the Winnipeg grain exchange. It can do so only by special order in council which would authorize the board to operate in this way during the remaining part of a season.