

*Western Grain Transportation Act*

This Act will be attacking those powers. It goes on to state:

The proposed legislation also establishes an April 30th deadline for the setting of blended freight rates, based on the estimated amount to be shipped in the following crop year.

Referring to the advisory committee to the Wheat Board, it states:

The Committee feels the Canadian Wheat Board would be put into an impossible position by having to make predictions on the expected movement of grain at a time when the new crop has not been seeded. This could also have negative implications from a sales strategy point of view.

Again referring to the advisory committee to the Wheat Board which is elected by the western grain producers, it states:

In addition, the Committee is of the view that the implementation of a new grain freight rate structure will seriously damage the income of grain producers. It is a known fact that Canadian grain producers have virtually no income protection as compared to their major competitors in the USA and the EEC.

This is a statement by an advisory committee elected by 150,000 quota holders who are the producers of grain in western Canada. That is the way they feel about the Bill.

The Wheat Board has controlled the flow of grain through the quota system. Most of us who are farmers complain on occasion about the quota system. We all know that it is there and that it gives no advantage to anyone. However, this will be attacked or will be affected by the new Bill. The Bill will put an end to much of the fairness and weaken the Wheat Board in the process.

The Wheat Board is a fundamental agency as far as the Canadian grain establishment is concerned. The Wheat Board has been able to control the movement of grains to the terminals because it can call on quotas of a particular kind of grain at a particular time.

Up until a half hour or so ago, I was planning to move an amendment. I understand that it will not be accepted now; is that right?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** The Hon. Member for Prince Albert is quite correct. There is now a motion on the floor that the House do now consider the previous question. Accordingly, no further amendment is possible.

**Mr. Hovdebo:** Therefore, the Bill jeopardizes all the well planned and established procedures, those which have been established over the years and, in the process, eliminates the strength of the Canadian Wheat Board. If one eliminates the strength of the Canadian Wheat Board, one eliminates the strength of Canada. One affects the \$6 billion of money which comes back into the system from the sale of Canadian wheat.

The motion which I would like to move, and I will read it into the record, is the following: "That Bill C-155, an Act to facilitate the transportation, shipping and handling of western grain, to amend certain Acts in consequence thereof, be not now read a second time, but that the order for second reading be discharged, the Bill withdrawn, and the subject matter thereof referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture".

Such a motion would give us the opportunity to discuss the Bill at length and in the detail that is required in the debate before it goes to committee so that all of Canada can consider

all the issues which the Bill should bring before the House. We are not given the opportunity because we are being cut off at this time. Therefore, I think it is very important that the people of Canada, particularly the grain producers, recognize that the Bill not only changes the Crow rate, but that it also starts the process of elimination of the strongest and the best agency that we have had, particularly for the western grain producer, that is, the Canadian Wheat Board. That in itself is a good enough reason to stop the Bill where it is now.

**Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine):** Mr. Speaker, to continue with the debate on Bill C-155, which is a Bill to change the Crow rate and shaft western Canada once again, I find it very disappointing that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) is not in the House this afternoon. He has missed the contribution we have received from the Hon. Member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton) and the Hon. Member for Capilano (Mr. Huntington) who have more knowledge about this subject in their two little fingers than does the whole Quebec caucus combined. I cannot understand, and I find it most disturbing, why the Minister of Transport should be taking all his advice from the Quebec Liberal caucus with regard to the Crow rate changes. However, all I have heard most of this afternoon is some giggling and laughing from the backbench Liberal Members. That is all the concern they have for this particular Bill.

I have received many representations from across western Canada with regard to the Crow rate changes. One of the best contributions I have received has been from the Alberta Government. Alberta has a strong industry with a potential to be stronger. However, the impact of changes means, first, that the economic distortions which inhibit the development of the western Canadian livestock and processing industry will continue to exist and, in all likelihood, will be exaggerated. Second, farmers will be unable to develop or to benefit directly from system efficiencies that could result from the commercial operation of a compensatory rate structure. The opportunity for innovations such as unit train movements and multiple car rates will be significantly delayed and reduced. Third, shippers will be unable to affect the development of the grain handling system through the exercise of free choice. The opportunity to allow the market to create and maximize system efficiency at all levels will have been lost. Fourth, farmers and grain companies will be subject to an increasing bureaucratic and regulatory burden. That is the last thing that we need in this country. Crisis rather than the market place will continue to dictate the pace and location of private industry investment and affect systems operations. Fifth, farmers will be unable to take advantage of domestic feed barley, canola and crop diversification, production and market opportunities.

● (1740)

The *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, in an editorial of May 25 of this year, pointed out:

A governing party as unpopular as the present Liberal regime may have little to fear in yet more evidence that it is digging itself into greater political