

*Canada Grain Act*

pen, and we do have some difficulty occasionally approaching all of the grains community, particularly members of the producer group who do not have ready access to information at times.

• (4:20 p.m.)

In the same committee proceedings, at page 12 they say—this is very important because this is a board and council set up to advise the government—in their concluding remarks:

Reports received from various reporting sub-committees appear almost unanimous that the Governor in Council and the Canadian Grain Commission have been invested with powers which in present form, appear too broad. There is genuine concern that strict adherence to the letter of the proposed legislation, as presently formulated, could impose restraints and decrease, rather than increase, the efficiency of the grain handling system.

Let me repeat those words for emphasis, "decrease, rather than increase, the efficiency of the grain handling system." That statement was made by the most knowledgeable men in the grain trade. What persons compose the Canadian Grain Council? Who are they, and what do they do? They are comprised of producer groups, the UGG, the Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba wheat pools. In fact, up until very recently even the National Farmers' Union was a member of the Canada Grains Council. That organization withdrew its support for political reasons—something to do with their political survival. In any case, these are the most knowledgeable men in the trade. They state at page 12 that the study has been too rapid and that there is grave concern that if the bill is followed exactly it will impose restrictions and bring about decreased rather than increased efficiency in the grain handling system. This is a major complaint against this bill by these knowledgeable people who are directly responsible to their grain producers, the grain farmers.

I do not want to make a wide-ranging speech about this clause of the bill, but it provides that "grain dealer" means a person anywhere in Canada who handles western grain. Does this mean that "grain dealer" will include the Canadian feed board, commonly known as the eastern feed board, which was set up by this government a couple of years ago? Within this meaning they will be considered grain dealers. If this wording is interpreted correctly, they are grain dealers. I do not think this was ever the intent or that the grain commissioner should have authority over the eastern livestock feed board or the Canadian livestock feed board, whichever is the right name I certainly do not think that was the intent.

[Mr. Horner.]

The old act was certainly worded differently. It stated, as my amendment suggests, that "grain dealer" means a person in the western division who for reward, on his own behalf or on behalf of others, deals in or handles western grain. This is part of the difficulty in trying to fully understand Bill C-196. To me it causes a great deal of confusion and will continue to do so unless some amendments are accepted. This is why myself and as others have felt that amendments ought to be made to it. The bill in its present form should not be allowed to pass quickly. Rather than facilitate a more clear understanding within the trade, this would cause great confusion.

This clause indicates that anybody, even, the eastern feed board, who handles western grain or is concerned with the distribution of western grain—even to a large extent throughout eastern Canada, Quebec, the Maritimes and Newfoundland—would be deemed to be a grain dealer. He would have to abide by the act and, I suppose, obtain a licence from the Board of Grain Commissioners. Surely that was never the intent. If it was the intent, the minister should say that everyone is covered, nobody misses out. He should make it clear that everybody has to obtain a licence to handle western grain, no matter in what part of Canada.

I should like to go along with this bill, but I want the government to clarify its position and accept some of these amendments. With certain amendments the bill would be a great deal more sensible. My amendment suggests that "grain dealer" means a person in the western division who handles western grain. That might be only a small improvement but it is one which would bring about greater clarity and acceptance across Canada. It would create less confusion and fear in the licensing system which will be established under this bill, particularly in eastern Canada including Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes. It is a small amendment but I urge the minister and the House to accept it. It involves the addition of the two words "western division". I seriously urge the House to forget its prejudice and accept this small amendment, because it will make for greater clarity in eastern Canada in respect of the handling of western grains.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Order, please. The hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Anderson) is seeking the floor for the purpose of tabling a committee report. Does the House agree?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.