

enough capital be injected into a rebuilding program in order that the grain trade will remain viable. The low price for Canadian grain on the world market makes it imperative that our handling and transportation costs be kept to a minimum. In conclusion, this bill seems reasonable. It is an improvement on the original bill presented to Parliament last spring.

Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, I rise to take part in the debate on third reading of this grains bill. I wish to point out that we must assess the whole situation. The reason the bill is only being dealt with at this late date is summed up in the submission to the Standing Committee on Agriculture by the United Grain Growers. The submission was made on May 27, 1970, in connection with the original Bill C-196. I quote from the submission:

The Canada Grain Act Relative to National Policy.

If one of the main purposes of the Canada Grain Act is to foster increased grain trade, should not extension changes in the act be delayed until a national grains policy has been defined? We are thinking here of the report of the federal task force on agriculture. For the first time in our history we have an overall grain policy recommendation in writing; one which farmers and Members of Parliament will criticize and rewrite. Presumably this report will form the basis for a new national policy for agriculture. We cannot help but wonder if a major change in the Canada Grain Act, as proposed by Bill C-196, is not an attempt to do things right before it is decided what is the right thing to do.

I repeat the last sentence:

We cannot help but wonder if a major change in the Canada Grain Act, as proposed by Bill C-196, is not an attempt to do things right before it is decided what is the right thing to do. We would, therefore, request delaying passage of the bill.

This submission was made to the Standing Committee on Agriculture by the United Grain Growers of Canada. The president of the United Grains Growers, Mr. Runci-man, chairman of the Canada Grains Council, an eminent body established to advise the Canadian government with regard to a correct formula for grain handling. On page 5 of the submission they sum up the reasons this bill is taking so long to pass. They explain why the bill has had so many amendments in committee and why it has not yet passed the House of Commons.

The bill is really a measure which sets out clearly the powers of the Board of Grain Commissioners. It states, in effect, that the rights of producers shall be protected; that their wheat will be fairly graded and accurately docketed; that they will be credited with accurate shrinkage. In essence, the board is the policeman which supervises the marketing of the farmers' grain, and generally speaking over the years it has done a good job. I have no complaints and I do not think the committee had many complaints on this score.

In the last session of Parliament, Bill C-196, as it was then called, was subject to a number of amendments. I have attempted to count them; there were well over two dozen. The number depends, really, upon what is taken to be a full amendment: can each amendment to an individual clause be counted, or should several amendments be grouped together and counted as one? In any

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event, some two dozen clauses were amended during that session of Parliament.

• (8:30 p.m.)

In the present session, five major amendments were made, the first being to clause 11. This clearly restated the objects of the Board of Grain Commissioners. According to the old bill, the objects were to protect the rights of producers. In the new session of Parliament the committee saw fit to spell out in the objectives clause of the bill the provision that the directives issued by the Governor in Council or by the committee should at all times be in the interest of the grain producers. To my mind, this is a substantial amendment. From that point on—I am paraphrasing the words of clause 11 to be found on page 12 of the bill—no direction can be made by the commissioners, the Governor in Council or the minister other than in the interests of the producers. This is one of the substantial amendments made this session which I wholeheartedly applaud and which the committee wholeheartedly supported.

Another substantial amendment was made to clause 12. I am sure the former president of the Manitoba Wheat Pool, Bill Parker, will be pleased to see it. He presented a brief in opposition to clause 12 (d) which gave the Board of Grain Commissioners power to operate any elevator, primary or otherwise, in competition with the grain companies now in the business. The amendment accepted by the committee, and the rearrangement of the amendment accepted by the House, makes it clear that the government is not to be placed in the position of operating primary elevators. As I say, I am sure the former president of the Manitoba Wheat Pool, an eminent figure in the handling of grain, will be pleased to see the amendment accepted today in the bill before us. I am sure Bill Parker will be pleased to see that the House of Commons has declared that the government cannot get into the business of operating primary elevators.

The next amendment approved by the committee was moved by a government supporter and was to clause 15 of the bill. In essence, it states that grade changes can be made readily, but that basically no change which is made shall decrease the value of the grain unless some special reason exists for doing so; the value of the grain must be maintained or enhanced by the change in grade unless an extraordinary case arises.

As a result of a further amendment, clause 38 was changed to exempt a licensee from having to take out insurance protecting him in the event of an act of God or the Queen's enemies. This did not completely meet the wishes of the opposition but it went part way toward bringing the bill into relationship with the protection provided under the old grains legislation. In accepting this amendment the committee merely excused a licensee from having to obtain insurance against acts of God or acts of the Queen's enemies.

The other major amendment gave a producer or a given company which had bought grain the right to appeal the grading given to the grain, whether or not the grade given was in respect of what is called visual characteristics or non-visual characteristics. In the bill as it