

● (1140)

I argue that we should market other grains as we market wheat. That would be better for the ordinary farmer and better for the country; let us plan our economy and plan our food production. We could produce more food and, with a planned economy, prosper more. Mr. Speaker, we do not believe in a few private enterprisers, a few of the big boys, skimming off the cream. I don't care if a few of the big guys on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange go broke. I do not represent them. I represent the ordinary grain producers of my riding, and overwhelmingly they want grain marketed in an orderly manner.

The farmer wants to market his grain through the Canadian Wheat Board, or collectively, and so reap the profits of his labour. Things are tough enough as it is for the farmer. He gambles on the weather, on international markets and international prices. Why he should need to gamble on the speculators I do not know. The farmer needs guarantees. If he is unemployed, he collects no unemployment insurance; if he hurts his foot in a grain machine, he collects no workmen's compensation. The farmer has no pension. His wife works on the farm. Apart from his farm income, usually he has no other income or salary. Many of the social benefits accruing to most Canadians do not accrue to farmers. Why should we make life more uncertain for the farmer by making him market his grain on the open market? It makes no sense for this country's farmers, or for the country itself.

I now come to my final point. Some say, "Let us market grain on the open market; let us have voluntary pools. That is a free enterprise idea which will allow the farmers to exercise all kinds of initiative and freedom." Mr. Speaker, our free enterprisers want guarantees as well as freedom. They want the government to guarantee 90 per cent of the initial price. They do not mind being free enterprisers and gamblers, if there is a guarantee; they do not mind being in the ball game, if they cannot lose. Surely they are dishonest and hypocritical. That is not old fashioned free enterprise.

This scheme would make old fashioned free enterprisers roll over in their graves. The scheme is nothing but socialized or subsidized free enterprise, state-free enterprise with guarantees. But that is the game the free enterprise boys like to play. For example, a few years ago our cattlemen and ranchers said, "We want no government interference, we are free enterprisers." Then, when the bottom fell out of the cattle market, the cattlemen came running to the government with their hands out saying, "Help us."

One year the cattlemen want no government interference; the next year the story is different. When the market turned down they ran to the government, asking for subsidies. Mr. Speaker, they cannot have their cake and eat it. For these reasons I am a socialist, in the NDP. I hear the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) chuckling. I know he is a socialist as well.

Mr. Mazankowski: What a joke!

Canadian Wheat Board Act

Mr. Nystrom: I know he really is, because he did not shed tears when that biggest enterpriser, the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner), joined the Liberal party.

Mr. Mazankowski: I had better stop laughing. I am helping you with your speech.

Mr. Nystrom: I know this bill will pass, and we shall see voluntary pooling. Probably it will be no great disaster for the ordinary farmer, because he will not participate. I know the wheat pools will not get involved; not even Cargill need be involved. Perhaps these pools will work, but my guess is they will not. They have not worked in the past and it is unlikely they will work in future. Hopefully we will learn from this lesson and, when the next generation of parliamentarians finally comes to its senses, it will do the sensible thing, make sure grain is marketed in an orderly way under the auspices of a board like the Canadian Wheat Board, so that we can plan our economy properly and decently.

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to participate in this debate. However, having heard the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) presenting his viewpoint on freedom of choice, the private enterprise system and socialism, I feel impelled to enter it. I cannot let his statements go unchallenged. You know, a bright young man who entered politics immediately after leaving university and who was never associated with farming should not hold himself out as an instant expert on agriculture. His speech was full of holes and wrong statements.

Mr. Mazankowski: It was fluff.

Mr. Murta: Many of his statements were totally wrong. Really, when we debate third reading of this bill we are debating, as that hon. member, and the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton) suggested, freedom of choice. We want to preserve it; obviously the NDP does not. It wants the farmers to have only one choice, the NDP's choice. The NDP presumably would make the rules for the system and farmers would be forced to obey. That is not freedom of choice.

Most farmers think the Canadian Wheat Board is doing a good job of selling. We agree. It has made some innovations since I first appeared on the political scene. In the early 1970's it encountered marketing problems. It overcame those and, under a series of innovated measures, sold to the private trade; in other words, sold wherever it could. It saw world prices were lower and stocks building up. Farmers in western Canada overwhelmingly support the Wheat Board. It serves us well at present, but may not be adequate in the 1980's. Of course, farmers are given the option of selling to the private trade for instant cash, if they want it. They have that advantage. Really, when you come down to it, that is the crux of the question: freedom of choice.

● (1150)

I have some concerns about Bill C-34 because of the fact that although the opting in provisions are there, the opting out