

Canada Grain Act

Mr. Argue: The letter is in the evidence of the committee on agriculture. It will be made public as soon as it is printed. I suggest to the hon. member who has interrupted that he take the evidence, when it is printed, and find out whether I have misrepresented it at all. In order to make certain that my statement is clear I say again that over the signature of the secretary of the board of grain commissioners is to be found the statement that the railway companies had no authority but to spot box cars one to each elevator.

But as we have seen happen with the board of grain commissioners so frequently in the past, they can change their minds. They interpret the law in one way at one time and in another way the next time. We have seen an illustration in the question of whether a farmer has the right to deliver his grain to an elevator and have it graded subject to grade and dockage. We had three or four legal opinions on that question by the board of grain commissioners, each one different from the other.

So in January the board of grain commissioners again gave an opinion. They said they had changed their minds, and did not think the railway companies were required by law to spot box cars, one to each elevator company. So we had more confusion with regard to this problem brought about by the board of grain commissioners.

The next excuse we had was that the wheat board could not get into the car distribution business, and that any suggestion such as that which has now been moved by the hon. member for Rosthern would be a terrible thing.

Mr. Tucker: And which you voted for.

Mr. Argue: O.K.; technically, yes.

Mr. Tucker: Yes, you voted for it.

Mr. Argue: But not on the basis of its being a solution to the problem.

Mr. Tucker: Then why did you vote for it?

Mr. Argue: I will explain that. In the report the committee says this—

Mr. Johnson (Kindersley): The house has not concurred in the report.

Mr. Tucker: We did; unanimously.

Mr. Argue: The committee report in one sentence approved of the operations of the Canadian wheat board. Had I voted against the report because I feel the provision requiring the wheat board to spot box cars in a special manner is not the best method, the hon. member for Rosthern would have stood up in the House of Commons and gone across

the country saying the C.C.F. members had voted against the operations of the Canadian wheat board.

Mr. Tucker: That is what you would have done. Don't judge others by yourself.

Mr. Argue: We agree with most of the statements in the report. But as the hon. member for Rosthern himself well knows, the C.C.F. members on the agriculture committee are opposed to the suggestion he has moved this afternoon, because he has moved it as an alternative to the principle advanced by this bill. We therefore intend to vote against the amendment moved by the hon. member for Rosthern.

Mr. Tucker: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Tucker: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member says I well know that they are against the principle embodied in this report. The main recommendation of this report was voted for by the hon. member. How could I know that he was against it if he voted for it?

Mr. Argue: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to break the rules of the committee on agriculture even if I am tempted to do so by the hon. member for Rosthern. The hon. member for Rosthern knows that the sitting was in camera. He knows precisely, too, the position of the C.C.F. members in that committee, and if he wishes to check the record he can see that we do not believe the proposition now before the house is in fact a solution to the problem. But rather than be accused of disclosing something that occurred in camera, even in face of the inference of the hon. member for Rosthern, I shall not refer to the precise provision the C.C.F. members advanced in that committee.

However, I say the producers have been given the run-around, and have been given one excuse after another. I have already listed about five of them. Another one used by the minister in making his speech a few weeks ago was that he had received no draft bill from the wheat pool. He had a brochure. We knew it was not a draft bill, true, but it set forth the various recommendations of the wheat pool organizations. However, the minister said he had received no draft bill. Then there was passed around in the agriculture committee—I was not there that day, but it was passed around—by Mr. Ben Plumer, the president of the Alberta wheat pool, a draft of a bill handed to the minister some weeks or months before. I hold that draft in my hand, and it sets forth in clear legal terms—