

am all for helping them if they will help get more protection for the authority of the Canadian Wheat Board.

● (1640)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Hon. Member's time has expired. He may continue with the unanimous consent of the House.

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** No.

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville):** Mr. Speaker, it is rather entertaining for me to see Hon. Members of the NDP on the run. The Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin) has stooped to the lowest of all lows. I suppose that if I were a Member of a Party that stood at 14 per cent in the polls, I would use every act of desperation as well.

The fact of the matter is that Hon. Members of the New Democratic Party continue to make fools of themselves. They have lost their credibility here in the Chamber and I suspect that they are losing it very quickly out there in the country as well. The NDP is the Party that was going to stonewall and obstruct and kill this Bill. What do we see now? We see this Party bringing forward 174 amendments to try to improve the Bill. They were not too successful because they stretched the point a little bit.

Only 46 of those 109 motions were found in order and 64 of them were simply frivolous motions that made no sense. As a matter of fact, a good portion of those motions were what I would refer to as musical clauses. All that the NDP Members were proposing to do was to move a clause from one section of the Bill to another section. They were playing the game of musical clauses and trying to convince the people that they were really digging in for an all-out fight. It was simply frivolous though, Mr. Speaker.

The fact is that this issue is one that is too important to be dealt with in the frivolous manner employed by Hon. Members of the NDP. This issue is too important simply to stonewall, block or propose frivolous amendments in order to engage in innocuous debate. The issue simply goes beyond the responsibility of all Members of the House.

Quite frankly, the Hon. Member suggested that we were prepared to accept sanctions as applied against the Canadian Wheat Board. The Hon. Member should know very well that our Party moved an amendment in committee which now stands in the name of the Hon. Member for Kindersley-Lloydminster (Mr. McKnight) to remove sanctions as applied to system participants other than the railways. The Hon. Member for Regina West thought that it was a pretty good idea when it was brought up in committee and he supported it. He moved that amendment here and it will be dealt with. I could say to him that our Motion No. 44 is considerably better than his Motion No. 38. Quite frankly, we are glad to have him on board.

The other thing that the Hon. Member for Regina West has suggested is that we in committee were trying to take away and undermine the integrity and the power of the Wheat

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Board, and that now here in the House we are trying to do something different. I only draw to the attention of the House and of the people who may be watching today the fact that it is clearly on record that the Hon. Member for Regina West agreed to support this very same amendment that we are dealing with right now. I will read from page 129:31 of the committee's Proceedings and Evidence where the Hon. Member for Regina West is reported to have said:

If Mr. McKnight's amendment covers the ground that I am concerned about as well as any ground he is concerned about, I will be quite happy to withdraw mine and move his in. But I need more out of our legal counsel and our officials.

The legal counsel to the committee, Mr. Keith Thompson, said, as reported at page 129:36 of the committee's Proceedings and Evidence:

What is important to the farmers, of course, is the ultimate ability of the Wheat Board to sell. Without that, there would be no movement of the product.

So in my opinion, these final three lines of this particular proposal capture the essence for the existence of the Wheat Board and identify its principal functions.

That was said by the committee's legal counsel. We should not have to hear any namby-pamby suggestions from the Hon. Member for Regina West which would indicate that we were moving amendments deliberately to undermine the role of the Wheat Board. As a matter of fact, the thrust of the amendment is simply to do just the opposite.

There is absolutely no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the Canadian Wheat Board is an institution that enjoys broad based support in western Canada. It enjoys the broad based support of the farmers who produce grain and who want to market their grain at a price that will give them a reasonable return for their investment and for their efforts. Very simply put, this motion seeks to reaffirm that fact.

As the Hon. Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Gustafson) pointed out, there are criticisms of the Canadian Wheat Board. There are some farmers who are not always happy with it, but fair, just and constructive criticism certainly has a place. Some farmers do not like the fact the commissioners are appointed at pleasure for a period of time until they reach the age of 70. We talk about accountability and there are some farmers who do not really like that. However, in the final analysis, the farmers line up in support of the Canadian Wheat Board.

Hon. Members of the New Democratic Party, like a herd of fox terriers, have always tried to make the case that any improvements that are advanced by anyone in an attempt to make the system more efficient, responsive and reliable are simply undermining the Canadian Wheat Board or the Canadian Grain Commission. If we were to follow the NDP strategy, we would surely be moving grain with horse and buggy and we would have elevators every five or six miles.

Such has been the case with the Administrator. Members of the New Democratic Party, the membership of the pools and some other farm organizations used the same fear tactics, innuendo and hysteria when we talked about the introduction of the grain transport co-ordinator when that office was set up in 1979. My goodness gracious, we were going to undermine the Canadian Wheat Board and the whole concept of orderly marketing. Everything was going to go out the window. What