

### Feed Grains

ment by an honoured predecessor of mine in the riding of Selkirk. I quote the following from *Hansard* of February 25, 1949:

Since 1919 the belief has persisted throughout the west that only a Wheat Board or a grain board, handling the whole of the western crop, will give efficient and satisfactory service, and secure a square deal for the farmer.

That was Scotty Bryce speaking. Those words still remain true. Any new feed grains policy must accomplish three major purposes. In saying this I am repeating something that the minister said in his remarks. First, it must provide a fair and predictable price to the producer for his commodity. Second, and I draw this to the special attention of the minister since he seemed to express some doubt that it was understood by members of the NDP, it must provide adequate supplies of feed grains to feeders in all parts of the country in such a manner that no part of the country has an undue advantage over the other parts. Third, a national feed grains policy must provide for orderly marketing and avoid a return to the chaotic conditions which applied in the marketing of feed grains prior to the Canadian Wheat Board being given jurisdiction over that field in 1949. If feed grain marketing is placed back in the hands of speculators, a major disservice will have been done to agricultural producers in all parts of this country and to the Canadian consumers of food.

One of the major reasons for placing feed grains under the Wheat Board in 1949 was to create conditions which would ensure adequate supplies of feed grains necessary in turn to ensure adequate domestic supplies of meat and poultry products. An open market condition is bound to frighten many western farmers out of the production of feed grains and back into wheat, with a consequent reduction in availability of feed grain supplies to feeders, with a consequent rise in prices of feed grains and thus, in the end, in the cost of meat and poultry products for Canadian consumers.

In his speech the minister mentioned many of the problems associated with the current feed grain marketing arrangements. Many of the points he made were valid; many others were red herrings. I suggest those problems can best be solved within the context of the Canadian Wheat Board. I want to suggest three or four steps to the minister that would help in this situation. The first principle that must be understood is that the Canadian Wheat Board should continue to be responsible for the interprovincial movement of feed grains. Second, it should be understood that the provinces are responsible for the intraprovincial movement and pricing of feed grains. Third, it should be possible, where a province so wishes, that a province can delegate to the Wheat Board responsibility for pricing and control of feed grains in intraprovincial trade.

Saskatchewan and Manitoba already have such enabling legislation on their books. I am not sure of the position in Alberta, but it is not important to the national scene because very little of the Alberta feed grains move to the east: most of it which leaves the province moves out to British Columbia or to the Pacific rim countries. As I say, the legislation is there; it can be used by a national government that wants to strengthen the Canadian Wheat Board.

[Mr. Rowland.]

• (2130)

Fourth, a national pricing structure should be introduced which guarantees buyers of feed grains in all areas of Canada access to feed grains produced in western Canada at prices comparable to those paid by users of feed grains in western Canada, adjusted for transportation, handling and Wheat Board operating costs. Fifth, in order to prevent fluctuations in price due to variations in supply from year to year, a national feed grains policy should incorporate the principle that the federal government maintain a feed grains bank which could be used to alleviate actual physical shortages of feed grains at any given time necessary to meet domestic requirements.

If a national feed grains policy incorporated those five points we should meet most of the objections and problems which the government placed before us this evening. If the Canadian Wheat Board were establishing the price for the sale of feed grains within the provinces as well as interprovincially—and I insist this is possible under Saskatchewan and Manitoba legislation—then the kind of price differentials which irritate farmers in Quebec would not exist. There would be an even more orderly marketing of grain in Canada than at present.

I commend this five-point program to the minister's attention. I suggest he examine it in detail before he goes to see representatives of the western governments in Calgary. I suggest, also, that the Minister of Agriculture examine these suggestions before he goes to see the ministers of agriculture in Prince Edward Island. To me this is the way to deal with the very real problems the minister presented to us this evening. There are problems in the marketing of feed grains, but they will not be solved by abandoning the Canadian Wheat Board, an institution for which the western farmer fought for over 70 years. The western farmer will not stand for the abandonment of that organization.

**Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar):** Mr. Speaker, listening to the speeches made so far this evening, one wonders about a motion such as this and why we are debating it. The hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Gleave) and the hon. member for Saskatoon-Humboldt (Mr. Lang) made speeches containing very little of substance. It is evident that the minister in charge of the Wheat Board is not ready to show his hand yet, so we are really debating a matter of speculation tonight. It is almost like debating with a ghost, because we do not know exactly what we are talking about.

I think we could spend our time in more constructive debate if the minister has kept his earlier promise and brought the amendments, if that is what they are to be, before the House so that they could be debated in a proper manner. At present it looks as if the changes will be brought in very shortly, before the end of the year. In all probability the House of Commons will not be sitting and there will be no chance for meaningful debate on this very important issue.

I should like to comment on two main points in the minister's speech: one is orderly marketing and the other the free movement of trade. In connection with orderly marketing, I remember that not so long ago in this House we in our party urged acceptance of a motion to increase