

Canadian Wheat Board Act

available market to all the wheat producers of western Canada is the primary function of the Canadian Wheat Board. Because unless there is a proper and fair allocation of the market that is available, the full purpose of the wheat board falls by the way.

I suggest that it is not enough simply to set quotas for specific points and just to leave it at that. The reason I say this is because a quota has no validity whatever until there is space in the elevators at the delivery points to which the producer can haul his wheat, and there have been some shortcomings on the part of transportation services in the provision of this space.

● (4:40 p.m.)

The minister who was formerly responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, now the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp), stated in this house that he and his officials along with members of the Canadian Wheat Board were giving serious consideration to bringing in a new quota system. He went on to say he would shortly be outlining these new ideas for the benefit of hon. members, the intention being to change the quota system in such a way as to make it more effective in accomplishing the purpose for which it was designed.

We have heard nothing further about this. We have heard nothing on the subject from the minister who now has responsibility for the wheat board. We do not know what came out of those discussions or even whether they are continuing. This is a matter of great importance. I know that some places on the prairies wait three or four months to have their quotas brought up to the same level as others during the crop year.

I do not wish to be misunderstood. During this last crop year there has been a large market and the kind of weather which is conducive to the movement of huge crops by rail. So no serious disparities have arisen. Indeed, I do not know of any areas which are complaining that their quotas are substantially below those of other areas. This is not a problem which arises this year.

I suspect, however, that if wheat exports were to decrease, or if difficulties arose in connection with transportation, the problem would immediately arise again. I hope the minister will tell us either today or at an early date what the wheat board has in mind by way of a revision of the quota system so that these wide discrepancies as between shipping points may not arise in the future.

[Mr. Olson.]

Mr. J. E. Pascoe (Moose Jaw-Lake Centre): I shall speak on this bill for only a few moments. The hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Olson) referred to quotas but as usual, of course, he made no suggestions as to how they might be changed.

I wish to draw once again to the attention of the minister the very favourable location of the elevator at Moose Jaw. Situated as it is on the main line of the C.P.R. and accessible to the C.N.R. routes, this elevator should be put to greater use than has been the case in the last few years. In my opinion this would improve the working of the quota system in some of the country districts in the region; I say this because the elevator at Moose Jaw has a capacity of some 5.5 million bushels of wheat.

I am glad to see it is being used to near full capacity now, and that its utility is thus being demonstrated. At the risk of worrying the minister with repetition I wish to emphasize once again the importance of this elevator because, among other things, of its strategic location.

During the sittings of the standing committee on transport and communications many references were made by witnesses and others to modernizing the arrangements for handling and moving grain, particularly wheat. I suggest to the minister that the Moose Jaw elevator has the necessary cleaning and drying facilities to enable it to fit into the pattern of grain transportation envisaged in the next few years. It has been envisaged—and this came from the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill) himself—that pipe lines might be used to move some of our grain. I believe that the Moose Jaw elevator, because of its location and other advantages, could fit into this technique, if it ever comes about.

I hope the minister will draw the attention of the Canadian Wheat Board to my remarks. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Greene) is not here but perhaps the hon. gentleman will ask his colleague to draw the attention of the Board of Grain Commissioners to what I have said, inasmuch as that minister has responsibility for the work of the commissioners.

Mr. Ed. Nasserden (Rosthern): I shall try to limit my comments on this bill to about one minute. Since second reading took place, at which time I mentioned the possibility of rye and flax being placed under the jurisdiction of the board—a suggestion which has been reinforced today by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker)—I have had occasion to read the reports of the agriculture