

Canada Grain Act

flexibility to package and certify specific qualities of grain and, finally, specific terms of office for commissioners and assistant commissioners.

● (1220)

You will notice the way in which the Government worded that last part. It is just a little less than accurate to say, "to provide for specific terms of office for commissioners and assistant commissioners". As I indicated previously, that really means that the Government has decided to provide for a guaranteed seven-year term of office for one of its colleagues. The Member for Swift Current—Maple Creek (Mr. Wilson) was all upset a while ago because I dared to raise this issue in the House of Commons. The Member was so successful in his representation that I was not going to speak on this issue again. However, since he raised it again I thought that I should mention it once again myself just to remind Canadians of what is going on.

In his remarks the Member for Swift Current—Maple Creek said that only a Liberal could say that this issue is inappropriate, implying—if you can believe it—partisan motives on my part. I know that you do not believe that either, Mr. Speaker. However, do not think for one minute that I am the only one concerned about this. In fact, a very well respected newspaper, *The Toronto Star*, has raised this as an issue of concern.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Boudria: I see that a few Tories wake up whenever you talk about *The Toronto Star*. Well, if the Tories will cool down for a minute I will give them other sources almost as factual as *The Toronto Star*. The *Manitoba Co-operator* was of the same opinion as I on this. Tories sometimes believe that everyone in the media is out to get them. I suppose they can believe whatever they like, however inaccurate it is.

I will remind you of a letter sent by Prairie Pools Inc. I ask the Conservative Member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Belsher) to pay attention to this because it is important and we may ask questions later. Prairie Pools Inc. sent a letter to the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Agriculture who happens to be the Member for Swift Current—Maple Creek. The letter is dated July 18. This letter was not written by myself as an opposition Member of Parliament but by Prairie Pools Inc. It says:

In regard to Bill C-112, the three Pools support the authority of the Canadian Grain Commission in establishing and maintaining standards of quality for Canadian grains and oilseeds and regulating grain handling in Canada . . . PPI believes that it is imperative that appointments be made on the basis of relevant background and requisite skills to ensure continuity and effectiveness within the CGC. PPI also has some concerns with the length of the renewable term of appointment contemplated in the legislation of up to seven years.

I did not cook this up. I certainly did not tell Prairie Pools Inc. to include this in the letter it sent to the Government. Even if I had tried, I doubt that I would have had much influence in causing it to do so because it is, of course, a pretty

independent-thinking group which says what it wants based on what it believes is correct.

Prairie Pools Inc. says that the Government has failed by not indicating specific qualifications necessary to do this job and by providing for a seven-year term of appointment.

Mr. Althouse: Renewable.

Mr. Boudria: Yes, as the Member for Humboldt—Lake Centre (Mr. Althouse) has just indicated, a renewable seven-year term.

I just wanted to express those concerns to the House. We do agree with the other provisions but I have strong reservations about that clause. My colleagues, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Gary (Mr. Axworthy) and the Hon. Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) have expressed those concerns in the House. The Member for Algoma even moved an amendment at committee. I expressed those same reservations at report stage earlier today.

I hope that the representations we have made have convinced government back-benchers to take a second look. I know that deep down inside some of the Tory back-benchers who will not be getting such a sinecure are probably wondering why this Member should be getting such a sinecure when they will not. When the Member for Nipissing (Mr. Mantha), who is seated over there, is defeated shortly no one will give him a juicy job at \$80,000 a year, much less a juicy job renewable for two seven-year terms.

I remind Members of that and remind them to be free and independent thinkers because the Government will not take care of them in that way. Conservative Members of Parliament should not opt for a system which provides for appointments in such a manner.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, this concludes the remarks I wanted to make at third-reading stage of Bill C-112, and I venture to hope that the House will pass the Bill today, even if personally I have to express my reservations about the clause in the Bill that allows Commissioners to be appointed for seven years, a new formula not found in the existing Act.

[English]

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few remarks at third reading stage in support of Bill C-112. This legislation is long overdue. It has been 17 years since there have been any substantial changes to this Act. The Government is very committed to consulting with the industry, and the amendments before us today are a by-product of that consultative process.

The Canada Grain Act provides a framework for the very important work of the Canadian Grain Commission. It is exceedingly important that we in this House affirm our support for the Canadian Grain Commission because, as I said