

he has laboured this point more than any other, that his reason for opposing this Bill is the injustice that might be done to somebody else, some other corporation, some line elevator. As I understand—and I want to be set aright if I am wrong, for I may have misunderstood exactly the situation—last year by legislation we took from the farmer, the privilege, which he had possessed for many years—of designating the elevator to which his grain could go. Did we not do that last year?

Hon. Mr. CALDER: I will not admit that. This is the contention of the pool.

Hon. Mr. SCHAFFNER: The farmers had that privilege?

Hon. Mr. CALDER: No. The farmers claimed that under the law that existed before 1925, they had the right to ship their grain to any terminal elevator. Last Session a law was passed, the wording of which undoubtedly took away from them that right, if it existed. The grain trade claim that no such right ever existed. I have said a dozen times to this House that nobody has ever satisfied me that legally the right did exist. If I could be satisfied that the right did exist, my whole case would fall to the ground, and I would vote for the measure.

Hon. Mr. SCHAFFNER: Why did they have this law passed last Session?

Hon. Mr. CALDER: For a very good reason. My honourable friend is losing sight of one of the main facts in the whole situation. Up to two years ago, or three years at the outside, there was no reason why the farmers in Western Canada should ask for this measure, for they had no terminals: they were not interested: the pool did not exist. The pool came into existence in Alberta in 1923, and in Manitoba and Saskatchewan in 1924 and 1925, and when they got into the business—or into the game, if you will—they saw that profits were to be made out of terminals, and that if they could arrange a law that would compel a flow through their terminal of more grain than they could gather at their own local elevators, they would be in a position to make huge profits. They see that opportunity, and now they come along and assert that they had that right under the old law; that it was taken from them in 1925; and now they ask that that right which they claim but which I dispute, should be returned to them.

Hon. Mr. SCHAFFNER: But why was that law passed last year?

Hon. Mr. CALDER: I understand from what the Commissioners said yesterday that it was passed because Vancouver came into existence as a grain shipping point, and there was some question as to whether, under the law as it existed, the farmer had a right to send his grain to Vancouver instead of to Fort William. That is the evidence of the Commissioners when they were called here the last time, and it has not been disputed. Commissioner Snow made a statement to that effect to our Committee—that the only object in having the law of 1925 was to give the farmer the undoubted right to have his grain shipped either to Vancouver or Fort William. I say that entirely new conditions have been established during the last few years by the creation of Vancouver as a terminal point, and on account of the springing into existence of the pool having the ownership of terminals.

I have not expressed an opinion as to what, in my judgment, should be done with this Bill. Frankly, I do not like to see it killed. I think there should be some way out; and I think the time we gained by not meeting last night has been well spent, because I believe that both sides have been very busy since then in trying to ascertain whether or not they can arrive at an amicable conclusion as to what is to be done. I trust that if we have to sit for another two or three days some solution will be found along that line.

However, that may not be accomplished. I do not know; I have no authority to say anything in regard to that; I do not know what is happening, never having been consulted. But if some settlement of that kind cannot be made, it seems to me that one of two courses is open to this House. First, we must give to the organized farmers the undoubted, absolute right to acquire elevators, either by building, by purchase, by lease, or any other means, at any one of those 800 odd points where they are not represented. Even if they do not wish to invest new capital, and do not care to duplicate existing facilities, let us give them that right anyway.

If that cannot be agreed on, we must go back to the old law, as it was before 1925. If the farmers are right in their attitude and they so claim strongly, and my friend from Moose Jaw (Hon. Mr. Willoughby) claimed it with all his ability yesterday—and if they had that right before 1925, let us go back to the old law; let us abandon this Bill; let us strike out the provisions we put through Parliament last year, and let us re-enact the statute as it existed in 1924, and place both these parties to the dispute exactly where they were before the dispute arose.