

*Canada Grain Act*

transportation by authority of the Governor in Council. Finally, as I said, the act provides the legislative basis for the block system.

In drawing this statement to a conclusion I should say that requests have been received from farm organizations and spokesmen for the grain trade in the last few years for a revision of the act. Over a two-year period the board has met with various segments of the industry and with departments and agencies of the government to discuss in general terms the changes which it is felt should be incorporated in the next act. I think it is fair to say there is general agreement that changes are required and that the changes proposed here reflect, in general, a consensus of the views expressed to us.

The proposed bill is a complete package. No further amendments are contemplated except perhaps one, and this has to do with whether or not there ought to be a levy or a check-off of some kind against producers to be used to support such agencies as the Canadian Grain Council and for other research, whether market research and development or in other fields. We should like this bill to be referred to the standing committee, at which time representatives of the producers could appear before the committee and indicate how they would expect a fund of this kind to be administered.

It would be fairly simple if the total amount were to be handed over or transferred to the Canada Grain Council which, of course, has a large producer-organization representation on it. But if other purposes were to be supported by this fund, it seems to me it would be advisable to hear from producer organizations how they feel the fund ought to be administered for these and other purposes. We would then be prepared to entertain an amendment which would reflect those views. It should also be noted that hon. members of this House, many of whom are in close touch with grain growers, are in a position to give us an indication of the manner in which a research check-off ought to be administered. No doubt hon. members will give us the benefit of their views in committee.

We have no particular resistance to making provision for this in the Canada Grain Act, but it seems to me that if we were to include a clause dealing with the matter before hearing from hon. members and from representatives of producer organizations we would be obliged to go fairly comprehensively into the manner in which such a fund would be

administered. I think it should be done the other way around; that we should first hear what they have to say and then bring in an amendment in such a way as to ensure its acceptability not only to hon. members but to the representatives of the organizations concerned.

The bill is a revision of the present Canada Grain Act. It does not enter into any new areas of authority, with one exception. It covers essentially the area covered by the present act. The exception is that it changes some of the provisions respecting grades and these, of course, will be studied at length when we get into the committee.

● (9:00 p.m.)

In summary, the bill provides for an essentially greater degree of flexibility and for a better integration of authority in this field. The bill represents a complete revision of the act. It was based on an in-depth study that covered an extended period of time, made by a committee that I am happy to say was thoroughly familiar with the Canadian grain industry. It is also significant that the act will provide for a greater degree of flexibility with respect to dealing with the changes made in grade specifications. When discussions in this regard are undertaken there is little doubt that the subject of protein as a grading factor in segregating Red spring wheat will be raised.

It must be emphasized that the bill provides only the mechanics for dealing with this new grading criterion. As far as the inclusion of protein in our grading system is concerned, the board has made a number of proposals the details of which are under consideration. The details of a workable procedure will not be completed perhaps to the point where they can be reflected all the way back to the producer before the bill becomes law. It could take as long as two years fully to implement a segregation system for wheat which would include protein as a factor. One of the main problems in this respect, of course, is in dealing with the very large inventory of wheat we already have in commercial channels.

I also want to advise hon. members that we do not intend to wait until we have a completely integrated system that reflects these changes in grade standards all the way back to the producer before we take some action to respond to our customers' requirements so far as minimum guarantees of protein are concerned. I believe there are some things we can do now, even with the inventory that we