

Canada Grain Bill

Mr. Mahoney: Explain.

Mr. Baldwin: I do not need to explain; it is very plain, as it will be plain to the people of Canada. This is a power-hungry government which craves authority to deal with issues in its own way, secretly, without coming to the House of Commons. I am terribly ashamed of my friends on my left who apparently bought this approach to the politics of today. We say this is the place where decisions are to be made. If there is authority to be given, it is to be given by this House and not by the members of the bureaucracy opposite. That is why we have held this bill up, so that it could be debated effectively, so that the people of Canada will know what it is that the government is asking.

We are not going to object to the bill going through tonight. We will have a chance to examine it in committee. We will have a chance to offer amendments. We offered a number of amendments before; we may have some more to offer. The 40 amendments we have had before the House may well be increased. Or it may well be that as a result of discussion between ourselves and the government we will be able to combine them and come back to the House at the stage at which the bill was before, that is, with a number of amendments which will receive the attention of the House and which might restrict the kind of debate which there ought to be.

However, we are not prepared to make such an offer without some objection, without our taking the position that this is a government which we must treat with a great deal of caution when it seeks the kind of powers it is seeking now. We are afraid of it. The people of Canada will learn to be afraid of it, having in mind what it has done and what it intends to do. It is for that reason we have insisted that this debate be held up to the stage where we can make known our points of view. We serve warning right now that when the bill comes back to the House for amendment we will see that every effort is made so that the government will be stripped of the powers it does not really need, and that authority will not be left with the minister but with the House of Commons.

If my hon. friends to my left want to go along with the government, that is fine. I would just call their attention to a section of the Criminal Code which provides a penalty for seduction under the promise of marriage. The kind of seduction the government is going to practise on the NDP is something they should bear in mind before this bill comes back to the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I should advise hon. members that if the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) speaks now, he will close the debate.

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am greatly tempted to comment on the irrelevant remarks of the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) respecting the Canada Grain Act, but I think that is hardly necessary because the great flaw in his argument is that he could not persuade the people of Canada that

[Mr. Baldwin.]

there was any validity to it in spite of the attempts he made.

Mr. Baldwin: Wait until the by-elections.

Mr. Olson: I certainly hope he is not advocating that the government, which was elected by the people, should not govern the country, because if he is I suggest he needs a lecture on democratic processes.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Olson: The rest of his comments and remarks I found very interesting, if indeed not entertaining. We will certainly give them consideration in the committee and when the bill returns to the House. A number of points were raised by the hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski) and the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley (Mr. Thomson) that I intended to deal with, but it seems to me that the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Douglas) dealt so well with their arguments that it is unnecessary for me to do so now. For example, a number of assertions were made that in my view had no validity to debate on this bill, such as with reference to the closing of elevators, starving communities of their economic well-being and that sort of thing. They are simply not valid when debating this bill and, as I pointed out, the hon. member for Assiniboia dealt very well with them.

The hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin) also made some very interesting remarks, but I believe the only thing I can agree with in his entire discourse was the suggestion that everybody in this House should support the bill. Other than that I find no agreement with any point that he raised. There was one serious point, in spite of the rather entertaining way in which he delivered it, respecting farmers delivering grain to the elevator of their choice. If this whole argument were based on the fact that farmers will choose not to deliver grain to all the companies he named, he is not in tune with the fact because farmers have had that option open to them for many years and they make the choice. Boxcars will be allocated to those elevators where farmers have indicated they wish to haul their grain, and that indication is endorsed by the fact that they have done it.

● (9:30 p.m.)

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my appreciation to hon. members of the House for the way they have handled this bill today. I thank them for the very genuine expressions of view that it is desirable that the passage of this bill be expedited, not only for protein grading but for a number of other provisions that modernize the whole system of handling grains in Canada. I hope that this same spirit will be in evidence when we get to the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the House for consent to reinstate the evidence taken in the Committee on Agriculture in the last session of this House when Bill C-196 was under consideration. There have been informal