

Canada Grain Bill

Therefore, in view of the distinction that was drawn in the case where royal consent is required, it seems to me that while the argument of the hon. member was a learned one, it should not prevail in these circumstances.

Mr. Rod Thomson (Battleford-Kindersley): Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to prolong this debate on third reading but I do wish to make a few brief comments. This bill contains three main points pertaining to the selling of grain, as I see it. One is the protein factor, which has been mentioned. Another is the mixing at terminals, and the third has to do with boxcar allocation, control over the shipment and movement of grain. All these things should assist in the movement of grain to market.

I would suggest to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) that there is more to marketing than just passing a new Canada Grain Act. For example, we should be looking for new markets, for new methods of preparing the products which we market, and at ways of providing financing for those who have difficulty buying the grain we have to sell.

In effect, what I say to the Minister of Agriculture is that we do not want any more excuses when we discover that we have a little too much grain on hand and we are not getting our share of the market. We do not want to wake up one morning and find that someone else is carrying out protein grading and we have to wait two years to pass a bill in order to do it. I suggest that we should be out, meeting the competition before it gets the edge on us. I would like to draw the attention of the minister to his point. We should be using imagination and initiative in preparing, selling and merchandising our grain. Now that the bill is being passed this evening, the minister will have a new instrument to aid him and the government in going out to find new markets, hopefully increased markets for all the grain produced by Canadian farmers.

Mr. R. R. Southam (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my remarks this evening on third reading of Bill C-175 will be very brief. As hon. members know, I have had the privilege and pleasure of being a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture which reviewed this legislation at some length. The original bill was C-196, introduced in the House early in the spring. I compliment the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) and the hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski), who are practising farmers, for devoting much time and research in preparing themselves for the committee study and the debate in the House on this very important piece of legislation.

The hon. member for Crowfoot, who resumed his seat a few minutes ago, outlined a number of our reservations and a number of the problems that we feel are still facing the agricultural industry, in western Canada in particular, in dealing with this Canada Grain Act. The minister and the government have accepted a number of opposition suggestions and amendments, and rightly so, Mr. Speaker, because to my utter amazement, as a layman not very familiar with the grain act in its origi-

nal form, not having been actively engaged in farming for a number of years, Mr. Runciman, head of the Canada Grains Council, presented a brief to our committee prior to the recess in June suggesting no less than 83 amendments, 50 major and 33 minor. This, Mr. Speaker, was an indication that we as a committee had to dig in our heels and do some homework in order to come up with a better bill. If not, we would lose credibility in the eyes of the electorate no matter whether we came from the opposition or the government side.

● (9:20 p.m.)

In conclusion because of the briefs that have been referred to I think we have come up with a bill which, although it is not entirely acceptable as it stands, is much better than it was originally. On the basis of those facts, Mr. Speaker, I am content to see the bill given third reading. Hopefully, it will contribute to improving the grain market for Canadians generally and for western farmers in particular.

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I spoke on the introduction of this bill and have had an opportunity to consider it at some length in committee, but there are still aspects of it which disturb me and I feel I must express my reservations. I do not believe the bill has been changed very much because it still has some very disturbing features. As has already been mentioned, the commission at one time had the power to authorize the licensing of elevators. When the bill was drafted, western Canada was growing agriculturally and there was a great demand for agricultural products, particularly grain. People were doing everything within their power to expand their operations and open up new land, building new communities in the process. It is a pity the House did not see fit to allow the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) to put a few more remarks on the record. He pointed out that the emphasis will be on the reduction of the number of grain elevators. The policy paper which arrived in my office this evening states: that any programs and policies which tend to encourage the breaking of new ground will be discouraged. I think that is a mistake. I agree that perhaps some new land is submarginal and should be taken out. There have been suggestions that the western Canada farmer should diversify and raise cattle, but to suggest that certain lands should not be opened up is taking too much into the hands of the government.

I have some land that is covered with bush, not under cultivation. No government can suggest to me that I have no right to open up that land after I have bought and paid for it and continue to pay taxes on it. No government can tell what my plans for that land may be. Eventually it may go back to grass, or it may be suited for rapeseed. There are many places where rapeseed cannot be grown. I may decide to put a crop in for a few years until the roots are rotted, before putting it into grass, so that it does not go back to bush. But a few bureaucrats sitting in Ottawa would not realize that this does happen.

With all the suggestions that have been made, I am afraid there will be a reduction in the elevator system. I

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]