

*Competition Bill*

**Mr. Frank Hamilton (Swift Current-Maple Creek):**

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to continue the debate on the competition bill, C-7. Because of the numerous government interventions in the activities of the rural and agricultural society we are justified in examining the nature, the form and the result of such interventions. The mechanics of receiving and shipping grain from our country elevators to the terminal elevators have remained practically unchanged in western Canada. It is interesting to note that the most successful operation takes place when the deal between the buyer and the seller is by agreement. On the other side, the marketing of our grain products is now completely under the control of the federal government through its agent, the Canadian Wheat Board.

Over the years the grain industry in western Canada has complied with all the laws requiring standards of behaviour in almost everything it did. Market forces have required the industry to meet another set of standards, and to look to the efficiency of management and its ability to develop customers. These requirements were all well understood. However, within the last year there has been a new set of requirements imposed by various agencies and tribunals set up by the government, and we now learn there is a so-called "confidential" or "secret" set of proposals that will probably be taking effect on August 1 of this year. It appears to me that a number of proposals contained therein could be judged as restraint of trade and will cause our courts to be filled with grain officials.

It is interesting that after the close of the commodity market in Winnipeg every day a small group gets together to establish the prices at which flax, rapeseed and rye are bought from producers across the growing areas of western Canada. This fixing has been condoned by the government over the years. Surely here is a case of restraint of trade, but I must admit that it has been going on for years quite satisfactorily.

I know of no industry in Canada that is more controlled and regulated by the government than is the grain industry. It is worthwhile noting that no less than 15 royal commissions have investigated the exchanges, and marketing in general, but not even one has recommended any serious amendments to the system. However, in the present crop year the government effectively closed the market for feed grain in Winnipeg. The result has been complete chaos, bringing more foreign grain into Canada for feed, more United States cattle into Canada for slaughter, and emptying the feedlots across western Canada. The point I want to make is just how political grain marketing in Canada has become, and how politics play a part in that marketing.

In September 1943, the federal government took to itself, through its agent, the Canadian Wheat Board, the sole right to market and set the price for all prairie wheat. The problem we are now facing relates to the fact that the Our grain industry people now must deal in a highly individualistic society. It is clear that interaction between the supplying companies and the market place has become a two-way street and the companies, through skilful product development, research, and marketing effort, must be able to steer a course that will be beneficial in the future.

**PUBLIC SERVICE**

**PROTECTION OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS OF CERTAIN DEFENCE RESEARCH EMPLOYEES—GOVERNMENT ACTION**

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the President of the Treasury Board. In view of the fact that the assimilation by the Department of National Defence of the Defence Research Board has had the effect of wiping out five bargaining units of employees, what steps is the President of the Treasury Board going to take to preserve the collective bargaining rights of these employees?

**Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think there is any sort of final conclusion yet as how these vested or earned rights will be adequately protected.

**AGRICULTURE**

**BRUCELLOSIS—FORCED SALE OF INFECTED ANIMALS TO GOVERNMENT INSPECTED SLAUGHTER HOUSES—ALLEGED INADEQUATE COMPENSATION—REQUEST FOR REPORT**

**Mr. Paul Dick (Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture regarding brucellosis and the compensation paid in respect thereof. I understand that in the first place the government is willing to increase the compensation, but I direct my question to the second part having to do with the fact that the producers are being forced to sell to federal government inspected slaughter houses and that they have been taken advantage of in not getting a fair return for the slaughter of their infected cattle. Has the minister caused an investigation to be made in this field and, if so, when does he expect to receive a report and will he table it when he gets it?

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I have informed some hon. members, including members of the committee, that we have asked for a complete report on this matter. The report will be made public as soon as it is submitted to me.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

**COMBINES INVESTIGATION ACT**

**AMENDMENTS RESPECTING DEFINITION, ADMINISTRATION AND OFFENCES**

The House resumed, from Friday, March 29, consideration of the motion of Mr. Gray that Bill C-7, to amend the Combines Investigation Act and the Bank Act and to repeal an act to amend an act to amend the Combines Investigation Act and the Criminal Code, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs.