

Dion promises to reinstate CWB if Tories scrap it

Canadian Press

Published: Wednesday, December 06, 2006

OTTAWA ~ Liberal Leader Stephane Dion says he will reinstate the Canadian Wheat Board as prime minister if the Conservative government dismantles it.

Dion says Prime Minister Stephen Harper is „trampling% on the board,s spirit and effectiveness by firing its president and issuing a gag order preventing the body from defending itself.

The Conservatives have promised to end the board,s long-standing monopoly on wheat and barley sales, saying they want to make participation voluntary.

Wheat board president Adrian Measner ~ who opposes the plan on the basis that it will effectively kill the board ~ was given two weeks, notice by Agriculture Minister Chuck Strahl last week.

Farmers are split on the issue, but a majority of the CWB,s board members ~ elected by grain producers ~ want to keep the single-desk model laid out in the Canadian Wheat Board Act.

A plebiscite of farmers on ending the board,s barley monopoly will be held in the new year, but no vote is planned for wheat.