

Pro-CWB Campaign, News Release

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Recommendations of Government Task Force will Favour American Grain Giants and Remove Democratic Decisions From Canadian Farmers

In responding to the Federal Government's Technical Task Force on the CWB, Art Macklin, farmer elected director for northern Alberta said: "I must express very strong concern about the task force's recommendation to repeal the CWB Act. Doing so would eliminate democratically elected farmer directors and replace them with government appointees. It would also remove the requirement for the government to hold a plebiscite among producers on the exclusion or extension of CWB marketing powers" observed Macklin.

"I would credit the Task Force for their admission on one point in clearly saying that the dual-market idea is, to use their own words 'not possible.' Farmers have a clear choice in the current CWB Directors elections between candidates supporting an evolving and strong CWB with its single desk (monopoly) status and those candidates supporting an open market with the CWB as a handicapped and soon eliminated player" said Macklin.

Bill Nicholson, a farmer elected CWB director from Manitoba said: "the CWB and its Board have spent a great deal of time studying scenarios for the organization without a monopoly, and concluded it would not be a viable business model. This information was presented to the task force, yet the task force actually expects the CWB to develop a business plan for a strong viable Wheat Board without the monopoly in spite of the evidence it is an impossibility."

Nicholson continued by saying "The Task Force Report is long on rhetoric and dangerously short on realistic business detail. The failure of the task force to show farmers a viable CWB without a single desk reinforces that the choice for farmers is a single desk CWB or an open market. That is the question farmers should consider in both the Director elections and any plebiscites the Federal Government is pressured by public opinion to conduct."

Macklin concluded by saying "The Americans have attacked the Wheat Board on 14 occasions. I'm proud of the fact that the CWB and the farmer elected Board have successfully defended the right of Canadian farmers to democratically choose the marketing system that benefits them. I am ashamed to say that our own Prime Minister is attempting to do the Americans' work for them." -30-

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