

Mr. ROBINSON: Not in 1921; the 1920 crop. As a matter of fact, in Saskatchewan—I do not know about Manitoba—in the case of one or two companies the prices on the C.N.R. line were four cents per bushel less than on the C.P.R. line.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: Is the necessity for rushing the grain down in October and November not partially influenced by the desire to get it to the head of the lakes before the close of navigation? Is that not one of the factors?

Mr. ROBINSON: It may be, although I think it would be rather an insignificant factor. I have tried in the earlier portion of my remarks to show how the farmer was being forced by his creditors to get the grain turned into cash as quickly as possible, and one of the reasons which they all give to him to encourage him to do that is that he would get a better price on the early market than later. I also stated that they overlooked the fact that by following their advice they were creating the very condition which they profess to be trying to avoid.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: I quite understand that, but assuming that the slow-up of delivery in October and November was, say, 50,000,000 bushels, it would be that much less out of the head of the lakes elevators by the close of navigation. Then in marketing that through December, January, February, March and part of April, it would all have to go by rail in order to get it out of the country?

Mr. ROBINSON: As a matter of fact, I have already pointed out in answer to a question that the transportation companies own to their inability to handle the grain as quickly as it is offered. It is exactly what you suggest. The fact that they cannot take it out means that it is held at the point of delivery, that is at the country elevator. Now, in ordinary circumstances the amount of grain that must be disposed of by the average farmer would be sufficient to take forward to the head of the lakes a very large percentage of the grain. He must sell enough to pay his hired help and other incidental expenses. That will come in any circumstances, but in addition to that he is being forced to throw the grain on a market whether there is any demand or not, and instead of going to the lakes, as was suggested by the hon. member, it goes no further than the elevator which is his own local point. As a matter of fact, I know of a case where the farmer did not get it all out until the following July for the simple reason that the railway companies could not supply cars. It may interest you further to know that to-day the farmers in North Saskatchewan and northeastern Saskatchewan are in danger of suffering very severe loss. I am referring to those located on the National lines, because there has been for the last week an embargo and they will not accept any grain for shipment. In the locality affected there is a very large percentage of the grain still on the farmers' hands that is in a damp condition and liable to be a total loss through heating unless it is moved to some place where it can be treated, that is, dried.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: I am fully aware of and I quite sympathize with the view point you have expressed, but it is argued, and I think with force and correctness, that the marketing of the crop through the medium of a Wheat Board would steady the flow, to use the expression which Mr. Woods used very aptly this morning. Is it not a fact that that would result in lessening the quantity that is put out at the early part of the season? Am I correct in that?

Mr. ROBINSON: Yes and no. You see the farmer in his present pressing financial condition would naturally want to get as much more out as he could in order to get his advance, but it does not follow that when he delivers it to the Wheat Board that they would immediately rush that on the ultimate market. They would have it pressed forward to the head of the lakes and perhaps to the sea-board.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: I agree, but you would slacken up the total quantity of grain, never mind where it comes from. By the operation of the Wheat Board we would slow up the forwarding of this grain we will say to the head of the lakes.

Mr. ROBINSON: I think to some extent it would.

[Mr. James Robinson.]