

Wheat Export Prices

of now, this figure is somewhere between 20,000 and 25,000 cars. The minister can get the exact figure.

What number of cars, additional to those now in the grain movement, are required from the railways between now and July 31 to complete delivery of the five-bushel quota? This could do wonders for the cash income position of the farmers. What additional number have already been supplied, compared to the number in the grain movement on July 1?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired. Unless there is unanimous consent—

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Benjamin: What action have the government and the Canadian Wheat Board taken to ensure that the terminal facilities of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool at both the lakehead and Vancouver are, in fact, being utilized to full unload capacity? Will the minister advise whether the grain companies have been authorized to buy grain after July 31? If not, will they be?

Will the minister advise if the crop year will be extended? Will the government authorize the Canadian Wheat Board to complete the purchase of a five bushel quota from farmers? They can deliver it any time in August, September, or whenever required. Will the minister discuss with the Canadian Wheat Board and the Board of Grain Commissioners the possibility of allowing offsite and offtrack storage, including the piling of wheat on the ground? Will the minister assure the Canadian Wheat Board that if there are any losses incurred as a result of this kind of handling, the tab will be picked up by the government of Canada? In that way, the minister will get the five-bushel quota delivered.

Will the minister discuss with the railways the possibility of using different kinds of railway equipment? I made a trip to the United States, through North Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin, a few weeks ago. I stopped in a number of rural communities to inspect their country elevators. They are not only using box cars, they are using gondola cars. At one point they had even boarded up stock cars, filling them with grain or corn. At present

[Mr. Benjamin.]

there are several hundred gondola cars, which hold almost 2,000 bushels of grain each, and which are normally used for hauling of potash, sitting idle in gravel pits and side tracks. Will the minister ask the railways to use their imagination in order to turn this and other kinds of equipment into grain moving equipment?

The hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) mentioned the situation in Peace River. You can go anywhere in the prairie provinces and see the same thing. We have found a consistent pattern of lack of co-operation by the railways, lack of imagination by the government, refusal by the government to authorize the Wheat Board to take extraordinary measures, because they know how to do the job. What they need from the government is authority and money.

I wish to repeat to the minister one of my earlier sentences. Surely, the minister will agree it is socially desirable to have the maximum number of people possible on the land on economic units. We do not want to hear this nonsense about less farmers. We need a government which will put the resources of the entire nation behind an industry that is basic to our whole economy. The ramifications of dropping farm income will hit the constituency of every single member in this house. Any member who does not believe that is under a great disillusion.

The ramifications of the drop in farm income over the past year and succeeding year are being felt by the farm implement industry, automobile industry, steel industry, transportation industry, fertilizer industry, building industry and lumber industry. Even the fishing industry will suffer. This is not proper. This is not civilized. It is not even good business. That phrase should appeal to hon. members across the way.

A basic industry should not be in this kind of financial condition. All we are asking the government to do is to come up with proposals, both short and long-term. We may criticize some, but we will undoubtedly support some. We may make alternative suggestions. We in this party, as well as farm organizations, have pleaded with the minister. The minister has yet to mention the latest submission from the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. Surely, they must have some knowledge of the subject. Proposals have been made to the minister week after week and month after month by farmers' unions, but we have yet to have any definite response