

Interim Supply

has advocated what we believe to be a very adequate system for the distribution of agricultural products as well as other types of production. We have supported and continue to support the principle of the two-price system. We believe it is absolutely necessary that our own people have adequate purchasing power so that they can buy the products of our farms, our waters and our forests, because there is a vast, untapped market right here in our own country.

We believe that if the consumers, the citizens of Canada, had the necessary purchasing power they would be buying agricultural products instead of some of the substitutes that have been presented and are being presented to them at present. We also believe it is necessary for us continually to seek export markets for the disposition of our agricultural products, and for this purpose we have advocated the acceptance of at least a certain amount of the currencies of other nations.

Hon. members will recall that on many occasions we raised the question of the Bretton Woods Agreements, which has interfered with the traditional markets we enjoyed for many years. In fact there is a strong suggestion that we should reconsider our position so far as the Bretton Woods Agreements is concerned. I have a clipping from *The Producer* of October 18, 1962, which is headed "Pakistan would buy more wheat."

A Pakistan government official says his country would buy more wheat from Canada but for the fact that it can buy U.S. wheat with its own currency while purchases made in Canada require payment in Canadian dollars.

S. M. Akhtar, deputy director of Pakistan's agriculture department, said in Edmonton that Pakistan bought about 50,000 tons of Canadian wheat a year, compared with some 1,500,000 tons from the U.S.

Mr. Akhtar, on a North American tour, described Canada's grain handling system as one of the best in the world. He commended the Canadian wheat board for its wheat grading program.

Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that anything that has contributed to the development of situations such as this should be given a second look. If other nations can engage in this kind of activity and dispose of their agricultural products in this way, why should we have to sit still and see our traditional markets go, and see those who want to buy from us unable to do so because of the restrictions that have been imposed? Therefore, Mr. Chairman, we believe it is absolutely necessary that we give consideration to this particular situation.

As I have said, I have the honour of representing an agricultural area very diversified in its nature. We have many problems that we would like to bring to the attention of the committee, but we are not going to do

[Mr. Patterson.]

so at the present time because it is our desire to get this item through. But on other occasions we will have an opportunity of dealing more specifically with some of these problems that are related to my own area and, of course, to other areas across the country.

Mr. Clunis: Mr. Chairman, the year-end recess seems a fitting time to examine the accomplishments which have resulted from three months of deliberation here. I think perhaps we might look at it on the basis of what history books some years from now might record, if in fact there is anything worth recording. Perhaps some slogans could be evolved. It might be remembered that while we were here Canada was committed to a plan of play now and pay later. Young Canadians of another day may recall that in 1962 the government, with the help of the conservative Conservatives, made Canada the first nation in the world to operate on the monthly payment plan. But I doubt if these would really be worth recording.

It is true, as has been said, that never in our 95-year history has our nation been taxed without a plan of taxation, and certainly never since confederation has a government operated in this country so long without a blueprint of financial policy. These are not minor accomplishments, but perhaps historians will honour us more for formulating and implementing a new national policy, a policy that for want of a better name might be called taxation without information. But I doubt if any of these will be the real test of our stature.

It seems to me that our record, which surpasses all others, will be remembered for the number of questions that have been left unanswered. I do not have in mind, sir, the question period of written questions. I think these are the outward manifestation of an inner dissatisfaction, the uncertainty and quietude of Canadians generally. This problem is not really a general one, Mr. Chairman; it is not really a question of supply or no supply, of estimates or no estimates, or even of budget or no budget. To think or speak of it in such general terms obscures the multitude of questions which earnest Canadians are asking. Day after day our business leaders, our editorial pages and the financial pages of our newspapers have asked these vital questions. Perhaps they have not made very good reading for the government. Maybe they have not got the message, so once more before the Christmas recess let us ask them here.

We are faced with a continuing deficit in our national account. Let us ask, how does the government propose to deal with it? Does the ministry propose to cover the deficit by reducing expenditures? This was the solution