

*The Address—Mr. Downey*

DBS figure was 106 million bushels and the Wheat Board figure was 64.3 million bushels. How could decisions be made on these kinds of figures?

We have now reached a situation in which there could well be a shortage of feed grain. If anticipated deliveries are made and if certain figures are in any way correct, we shall reach the situation in which there will not be enough grain to feed the cattle and livestock of western Canada. This is happening less than one year after the government said it would pay the farmers to cut back on wheat production. Actually, in nearly all cases the payments have not been completed. This, Mr. Speaker, is something that cannot be forgiven easily. Although some money was pumped into the western economy as a result of the summerfallow program, the net result of our not growing grain is that there is a disaster, because what has happened is like a crop failure for the farmers of the west. We desperately need an optimistic and far-sighted minister to look after our agricultural affairs.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Downey:** We do not have such a minister.

**An hon. Member:** But we certainly need one.

**Mr. Downey:** I can imagine what would have happened if legislation such as the Canada Grain Act amendments and Bill C-197 had been passed by the previous Parliament. That legislation would have been held up by the government as the saviour of Canadian agriculture. Government members would have stood up and told the people that these bills were responsible for the sales we have made. The truth is that it took only a little change in nature to turn the situation around completely.

I believe the Speech from the Throne mentions that the marketing board legislation will be reintroduced during the present session. I think there is a place for this measure. I desperately hope that the minister has listened to the representations made to him and that he will come forward with a bill that will permit producer representation on marketing boards. We do not want them to be controlled by what is strictly a government agency. If that were to become the case, I say that with all the pessimism and inaccuracy which has been evident in connection with the administration of the Lift program we shall be in dire straits indeed.

● (5:10 p.m.)

In my area there has been talk of removing some railway services. At present there is a question as to whether several passenger train runs in Alberta will be removed. The bulk of Alberta is not included in the designated area program for regional development. This is difficult to understand because there is no industry there. The people of these areas cannot understand why they have not been designated, when so many other areas in Canada with much more industry and many more attributes have been. The riding of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson), which has a great deal of industry, is designated. It is hard to understand why through

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equalization payments these people must help pay for the liquor strike that occurred in the province of Quebec three years ago. Very few people in that area realize that equalization payments to the tune of \$80 million are being made to the province of Quebec to make up the deficit in that government's revenue caused by the liquor strike of three years ago. Until there is better equalization and greater understanding on the part of the government, unity in Canada will be an impossibility.

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to join other hon. members in congratulating the hon. member for Bourassa (Mr. Trudel) and the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Douglas), the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. Although the hon. member for Assiniboia and I are from the same province, I cannot find quite as much optimism on the Prairies as he does. In this Speech from the Throne there are many similarities with the first two Speeches from the Throne by this government. It is very long on rhetoric but very short on substance and any specific action the government intends to take. I for one, am very tired of the old clichés, platitudes and rhetoric.

In my remarks today I wish to cover a number of issues that I think are important. I shall deal with matters of vital importance to people in my constituency, the agricultural industry and the whole western economy. I want to deal with over-all conditions in Canada and try to determine why we are faced with so many problems. I shall talk a bit about foreign ownership, unemployment, the rights of women—a subject we are hearing very much about—poverty and violence, something that is now a reality in Canada. During the past summer I had an opportunity to spend several weeks in my constituency. I travelled around from farm to farm. I visited farmers on small and mixed farms, people who are not well-off economically. I discovered something that I had not experienced before, a feeling of depression, not only financially but spiritually.

I welcome the fact that the government is anticipating larger grain sales. I think all the people of western Canada welcome this. I hope the government is right in saying that we have some of the largest potential markets this year. The people of western Canada would like to know what portion of the 700 million bushels of grain sold is wheat and what portion is other grains. The farmers have a right to know. They also have a right to know how much of these sales constitute firm commitments, so they can plan for next year. I think the hon. member for Assiniboia will agree with me when I say that the farmer does not know what is going to happen next year or the year after. There does not seem to be any type of long-range planning. This is apparent from the past record. When speaking to the farmers in Winnipeg in June of 1968, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) said, "Grow all the wheat you want and we will sell it." The farmers listened. They are efficient; they have grown a lot of wheat. In November, 1968, the Prime Minister said, "Why should I sell your grain?" In 1970 the government introduced the Lift program which pretty well forced the farmers to take wheatland out of production.