

National Harbours Board Act

and the united grain growers, would be the first to go along with my remarks.

I should like to make a personal reference to my association in this house with the hon. member for Humboldt-Melfort-Tisdale. I am sure that all hon. members who have been here since 1957 or 1958 share my belief that there is no member in the House of Commons—I say this without reservation—who works harder for his constituents than the hon. member for Humboldt-Melfort-Tisdale. I think it is well to recall too, his maiden speech in this House of Commons. At that time he said he belonged to a certain ethnic group. When he came to this country he never hoped he would achieve as much as he did. When he walked towards the House of Commons, as a new member he said that the statue of Sir Wilfrid Laurier seemed to look down at him and say, "You now have arrived". He has arrived. He has done an excellent job not only for his constituency but for western Canada.

In spite of the fact that this is the maiden speech by the Minister of Trade and Commerce, I want to take sharp issue with him in so far as the export of grain is concerned. If there is one subject about which I know something, it is this subject of grain, since I was raised in a wheat farming area known as Rosetown, Saskatchewan. I know the problems that the farmers have had over the years, and I know something about the problems of marketing grain. When the Liberal government was defeated in 1957 there were 700 million bushels of surplus wheat piled up on the farms, in old farmhouses and other old buildings, and at the lakehead. The quotas were as low as two or three bushels per acre. I do not believe the Minister of Trade and Commerce can make a case today for himself or for the Liberal government, because with a new Liberal government the farmers of western Canada can look again to the days when they will have surplus grain piled up on their farms. That is what he has promised them.

Not so long ago, after this government took office, I picked up a newspaper and noticed that the new Minister of Trade and Commerce had said that he was not going to take the same steps as the former minister of agriculture, the Hon. Alvin Hamilton. He said, "I am not going to China; I am not going to Hong Kong." He was going to leave it to the bureaucrats to look after this matter. I say to this new Minister of Trade and Commerce that he will have to be responsible to the farmers of western Canada for keeping the grain moving as it has moved for the last five or six years under a Conservative government.

[Mr. Woolliams.]

Mr. Sharp: May I ask the hon. gentleman a question? Is he suggesting that the former minister of agriculture signed the agreement for the sale of wheat to China?

Mr. Woolliams: Well, Mr. Speaker, I was not a member of the cabinet. I do not know what was signed. I have not seen these documents.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Woolliams: You may laugh now, some of you people from Toronto, but you will not laugh later. I know what Toronto thinks. They think that the public treasury pours out money to the farmers. Let me answer the question. I would say this to him. Does the Minister of Trade and Commerce deny that the figures for the export of wheat from Canada under the Conservative administration, over a five year average period, were greater than in any five year period since the institution of the Canadian wheat board? I have those figures in my possession, although I do not have them with me at the moment. I put them on the record the last time I spoke, and I can say that never did a Liberal administration, under the old regime of Jimmy Gardiner, export more wheat.

Then of course we had C. D. Howe who said to the farmers, "It is your job; you look after it." The farmers remember those words. They remember the great meeting in Winnipeg area when Mr. Howe forgot himself and told the president of the Liberal association, who was a farmer himself, to sit down and listen, that he, C. D. Howe, would tell them how to do it. Let's face it. The Liberal administration was never able to export more than 300 million bushels of wheat in any one year.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is misinformed, and I suggest that he look up the figures.

Mr. Woolliams: I have not got the figures with me but I will put them on the record. I did not bring them with me because this debate came on at five o'clock and I did not want to interrupt the Minister of Trade and Commerce. But, I think he used this bill to pad the way for a new era in western Canada, an era of decline in the export of cereals from western Canada to world markets. When the figures are put on the record he will find that, with our home consumption and export markets, we were able to sell I believe 370 million bushels of wheat in one particular year. There is no question about that and today the farmers of western Canada have a degree of prosperity that