

nection with this matter, but I do not blame him. No doubt he was speaking for the Minister of Finance; that was easy to see, but in spite of their fumbling and backing and filling with this great enterprise I believe it is yet going to be one of the greatest events of its kind ever staged in the world.

Now we come to the Mr. John I. McFarland episode. We have been lectured on more than one occasion by the Minister of Trade and Commerce as to the proprieties we should observe in the house; we have been told that we should have more consideration and less curiosity as to Mr. McFarland's activities on the grain exchange. Well, Mr. Speaker, when the government appoints a gentleman who has the backing of the banks and of this dominion I think we have a right to know what is being done. Did you ever hear of the federal farm board in the United States doing business by the surreptitious, hole in the corner, star chamber methods which have been adopted by this government with regard to this wheat transaction originally taken over on behalf of the wheat Producers, Limited, the pool? In the United States, where a federal board was set up, everything was done in the light of day; everyone knew what was going on and everyone was glad when it was all over. The speculative wheat activities of the American farm board and the stabilization committees appointed under it, contributed I believe very materially to the defeat of the Hoover government. But we have been censured on more than one occasion because we wanted to know a little about what was being done by this autocratic government under the unemployment relief measure which was financed with money raised by Canadian taxpayers and we surely should know. Last April, almost a year ago, one or two hon. members from the west suspected for over a year and were pretty sure that Mr. McFarland was in the wheat future business with a line of credit and government guarantees, yet it was not until a year had elapsed that the hon. member for Willow Bunch (Mr. Donnelly), the hon. member for South Battleford (Mr. Vallance) and the hon. member for Weyburn (Mr. Young) made certain inquiries as to just how the matter stood. I have not time to quote many of these inquiries, but I will read the question asked by the hon. member for Weyburn and the reply given by the Minister of Trade and Commerce, and I need only refer to the admission later made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Bennett). I quote from page 2084 of Hansard for last year:

Mr. Young: Mr. Chairman, I have not the reference before me, but speaking from memory, and of course subject to correction,

may I say that in the Financial Post of last week the statement appeared that when Mr. McFarland undertook to sell the 1930-31 crop he at the same time bought futures against it, and that as a result of his activities the government to-day is holding millions of bushels of future wheat which it cannot get rid of, except at a loss, until the price goes up.

This was not a direct statement; it was simply an interrogation in order that the Minister of Trade and Commerce might say what he thought of that rumour. Here is what he said:

Mr. Stevens: I do not know of a bushel of wheat held by the government, either directly or indirectly.

That was a year ago, yet last November the Prime Minister admitted from his place in this house that the government through Mr. McFarland had been in the wheat business for more than two years. I do not know how to reconcile these two diametrically opposite statements, nor am I going to attempt to do so; these two hon. gentlemen, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Trade and Commerce can settle it between themselves. They cannot both be true, however, and we believe we know which is the correct statement and that it is the Prime Minister's. We know that the government is not only in the wheat business to the extent of the wheat taken from the pool but that they have bought practically the same amount of wheat in order to stabilize the market and protect their own investment. Why conceal it longer? These facts are known. I was disposed to be lenient with the Minister of Trade and Commerce when I dealt with this question last fall; I took the ground that possibly he thought it better not to admit publicly what had been done for state reasons. In other words it was a little diplomatic tarrydiddler rather than a straight out and out whopper. Now we want to know when they are telling whoppers and when they are telling tarrydiddlers. From now on we will not know, so I think it would be well if the two ministers should settle it between them, so that we may know which is telling the facts and which the fancies.

What has been the reason for this secrecy? The government will get nowhere by trying to do a wheat future business in a backdoor fashion. No wonder wheat went down. People in other countries, sensing what was going on in Winnipeg, threw their wheat on that market and jammed down the price. That is why the wheat-marketing policy of the government only succeeded in driving the little fellow off the market and forcing wheat to the lowest point it has reached in three hundred years. Great is Diana of the