

Supply—Agriculture

which I thank him very much because at this time it is certainly much appreciated to have a review of that nature in this chamber. I do not believe he was in attendance at the meetings where those speeches were delivered and it may be a good deal was said that was not in the printed text, and also a good deal was left out which was in the printed text. But I make no apologies. I gather he indicts me as the minister for speaking to the agricultural community of Canada about matters other than agriculture. Well, I think I talk to them about agriculture problems quite often, and I make no apology for discussing with the agricultural leaders of Canada problems such as national unity, problems affecting the entire prospect of the Canadian economy, apart from agriculture, because it has been my experience that the farm leaders of this country are also among the foremost citizens of the country generally. They are interested in what is going on in this country.

I think it would be rather an insult to their intelligence, to their capabilities, to their desire to make this a worth-while country in all its parts, aside from the agricultural sector, if I said to them, "I will never talk to you about anything but agricultural matters because apparently that is all you are concerned with." This is not the case. But again the hon. member for Bruce apparently felt this was in some way belittling or insulting to the farm leaders of Canada. I do not believe it to be so.

The hon. member for Assiniboia, who also made a wide ranging address on farm problems, also said that the minister said that the farmers "never had it so good," which again I reiterate I have never at any time said, nor have any of my colleagues. We have said improvements have been made. The net income position is improving. There is still a long way to go and a great deal to do. That is all any of us has ever said.

The hon. member also alleged that there were mountains of wheat in storage in 1956 and 1957 prior to the time when the Conservatives came into office. Again I think we should at all times try to keep the record straight. Hon. members opposite feel it is politics if we keep the record straight, but if that is politics I think it is the best kind of politics, possibly a little better politics than statements which are not according to fact. The hon. member complained that apparently during Liberal times there is great carryover of wheat, and I gather it is his conclusion that during Tory times there is not much

[Mr. Greene.]

wheat in storage because it is sold. The facts are as follows:

In 1957 there were 734 million bushels of wheat in storage, in 1958 there were 648 million bushels, in 1959 there were 588 million bushels, in 1960 there were 600 million bushels and in 1961 there were 608 million bushels. In 1962 there were 391 million bushels in storage, in 1963 there were 487 million bushels, in 1964 there were 459 million bushels, in 1965 there were 513 million bushels, in 1966 there were 420 million bushels and in 1967, estimated to this time, 577 million bushels, which I admit is our worst year but it is still better than 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960 and 1961.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Greene: If those facts are politics, as hon. gentlemen opposite would allege, then I can only apologize for putting the facts on the record because I quite agree we should not be playing politics with the very grievous position in which the farmer finds himself.

● (9:40 p.m.)

The hon. member for Assiniboia referred to the Kennedy round, as did other speakers, and stated that in the Kennedy round the Canadian negotiators locked the door of the building—I think this is the way he put it—and gave everything away at Geneva. Again may I say that I think this is very unfair criticism of the Canadian officials who carried on the negotiations. The ministers attended at the conclusion of the Kennedy round and claimed very little credit for the great success the Canadian negotiators had. They did a magnificent job in the interests of Canada, and therefore I believe it is very unfair to allege that in some way they let the country down. As has been indicated previously, the main question at the Kennedy round which affected agriculture was the range of wheat prices, which under the world wheat agreement were in the range of \$1.75½ to \$2.18. By reason of the great success of the Kennedy round the far higher price range of \$1.95½ to \$2.38½ was achieved by our negotiators. Needless to say it was not easy to achieve this because the buyer countries were far more numerous than the seller countries, and they were not in favour of a 20 cent price-range increase.

I trust hon. members opposite are in favour of a price increase, although their objections would not seem to indicate this. Apparently they believe the Kennedy round was a mistake and that we should have kept the old