

The Budget—Mr. J. A. Ross

Mr. Ross (Souris): My understanding is that this matter has not been discussed at this session. At any rate I have practically made my point about the international wheat agreement. It was simply that it was going to cost the western wheat producers some hundreds of millions of dollars. I do not think there is any argument about that. I repeat that there should have been an escalator clause to provide for annual adjustment or consideration of the agreement. I repeat also that the western wheat farmers are subsidizing the consumers of bread in Canada by 36 cents per bushel.

I am reading from the Searle index, and I may be asked if I believe in it. I think their research man is one of the most efficient there is anywhere in Canada. While I am not concerned about the company he works for, or the Winnipeg grain exchange, I have known this gentleman for many years and no one has been able to contradict any of his findings.

I want to refer to the marketing of grain at North Portal. I have referred to this in other sessions, and to the fact that the United States farmer markets his grain on one side of the street while the Canadian farmer markets his on the other side. As of March 10 the United States farmer was receiving \$2.23½ cents per bushel for his grain net, while the Canadian farmer received \$1.43½, a difference of 80 cents per bushel.

Mr. Howe: What are the grades?

Mr. Ross (Souris): It says on a comparative basis; I presume No. 1.

Mr. Howe: There is no No. 1 in that locality.

Mr. Ross (Souris): That was the quotation set out, for that day's market, and I do not think the minister will deny it.

Mr. Howe: The participation certificate goes with the quotation.

Mr. Ross (Souris): If the minister wants to make a speech I will sit down.

Mr. Howe: I do not like to see you put phony figures on the record.

Mr. Ross (Souris): There is a difference of 80 cents per bushel. I will be fair to the minister and to the people who are handling the wheat and say that there will be a further adjustment to the Canadian farmer, because that is the initial payment.

Mr. Howe: I am glad you put that in.

Mr. Ross (Souris): I hope the minister will rise in his place and tell the nation through

[Mr. Speaker.]

this house that there will be a final settlement amounting to one-half of that 80 cents. But still there will be that great difference left.

Our class II wheat, No. 1 basis Fort William for export, is selling at \$2.26½. The price under the international agreement, and also for the Canadian trade, is \$1.90½. That shows a difference of 36 cents, and that is the amount by which the prairie farmer is subsidizing the consumers of Canada.

Somebody has asked why I do not refer to Australia. I do not know why the hon. member for Maple Creek (Mr. Studer) does not get up and make a speech on behalf of the farmers who sent him here. I shall refer to the price of wheat right here in Ontario, which I believe is a part of Canada, and where they are being paid \$2.35 per bushel. There is a difference there of 91½ cents between what the Ontario farmer receives and what the western farmer is paid under compulsory marketing by this government. The net to the western farmer is \$1.43½.

So much for wheat, Mr. Speaker. We will see whose prophecies come true.

Mr. Ferrie: Say something about rye.

Mr. Ross (Souris): I could say a lot about rye. The hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Ferrie) says, "Say something about rye". I remember the Minister of Agriculture a few years ago telling the people of western Canada that they should not grow rye.

Mr. Gardiner: No, no.

Mr. Ross (Souris): I know that I started to grow rye and I am not unhappy about the circumstances at all. Normally rye sells for 80 per cent of the price of wheat. What is the price of rye today? It is \$2.35 a bushel. There is your comparison on rye.

Mr. Ferrie: \$1.99.

Mr. Ross (Souris): I am not going to say anything more about wheat now, other than to repeat that on February 6, in the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne, I requested the appointment of a royal commission to inquire into the grading, marketing, transportation and storage of grain in Canada and abroad. On March 8 I repeated that request. The leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) also requested that an impartial appraisal be made of the losses of the wheat farmers of Canada under the five-year pool. The handling of the 1950 grain crop has been very unsatisfactory so far, and this is the ninth month of the crop year. I repeat the request for the appointment of a royal commission. The cost of such an inquiry would be very much less than one bushel of