

Supply—Agriculture

the difference between the agreement price and the world price was 22 cents a bushel. In that year 128,681,000 bushels were sold, leaving the farmers with a net loss of \$28,160,000. In the 1949-50 crop year the difference between the agreement price and the world price was 13 cents per bushel. In that year 110,802,000 bushels were sold, for a loss of \$14,300,000.

I want to make one thing abundantly clear, Mr. Chairman. The western farmers did not oppose helping Britain to recover after the war. They participated as Canadian citizens in the billion dollars of debt we cancelled, and they participated as taxpaying citizens in all the other assistance we gave to Britain to help build her economy after the war. In addition, the western farmers contributed \$318 million over and above the sums contributed generally by Canadian citizens. I should like to refer back to what a very distinguished member of this house, Mr. Quelch, said in 1953. At page 519 of *Hansard* he is reported as saying this:

Let me make one point in that regard. The granting of aid to needy nations is the responsibility of the people of Canada, not that of one group. If we are to extend the giving of aid in the future to have-not nations let us see to it that we spread the burden equitably upon the shoulders of all the people of Canada and do not try to place it upon the shoulders of the farmers as was done in connection with the British wheat agreement which costs the farmers of western Canada hundreds of millions of dollars.

Mr. McIntosh: May I ask the hon. member a question?

Mr. Olson: Yes, if it does not take away from the time I have at my disposal.

Mr. McIntosh: Is that the same speech as the one where he said he was in favour of selling to any country inside the iron curtain?

Mr. Olson: I have not read the rest of the speech.

In addition, the government of that day, and it was a Liberal government, arbitrarily forced the western grain farmers to subsidize the price of wheat to the domestic market of Canada. For example, on the wheat which was sold—and it is substantial, I am advised; it averaged about 150 million bushels a year—under the subsidy which the farmers paid to the consumer, the difference between the domestic price and the world price represented an enormous loss. In 1946-47 the average price on the domestic market was even less than the price under the British wheat agreement, and in that year the western farmers lost \$159 million. In the 1947-48 crop year the world price was \$2.88 cents for class 2 wheat while on the domestic market the price stood at \$1.58. So the total cost to the farmers in that year was \$195 million. In

1948-49 this same agreement cost \$33 million and in 1949-50 it cost \$19.5 million. This comes to a total of \$406.5 million, representing the difference between the world price and the price on the domestic market at that time.

Then, the next year, we had the international wheat agreement. If one calculates the total number of bushels sold on the domestic market and multiplies that by the difference between the world price and the arbitrary price set by the government, the farmers subsidized the consumers of Canada to the tune of \$155,500,000. If we look at all these things—the amount of money which was lost under the British wheat agreement, the amount of money which was lost through the government, arbitrarily selling wheat on the domestic market at those prices, and the further loss under the international wheat agreement—we find there was a loss to the farmers of \$273,565,000, representing the difference between the price under the international wheat agreement and the price on the world market. So, if we add it all up, \$592 million and another \$562 million, it is easy to find abundant proof that these two wheat agreements have cost the western farmer \$1,154 million.

I want to say in fairness to the Liberal party that the main agricultural organizations, the wheat pools and the farmers unions endorsed both these wheat agreements. But they certainly did not expect the Minister of Agriculture to plant the seeds of the idea that he was going to abandon them now. I think it should be abundantly clear that this government, in the light of the things which have happened in the last 15 years should be doing everything to strengthen the position of the farmers, now we have reached the point where it is more difficult to sell in world wheat markets. When those organizations in western Canada endorsed these agreements they did expect some additional support to level out prices when it became difficult to sell grain. I do not want to be too critical but I think we must be careful. I know that some of the urban people in my own constituency, in a wheat growing area, are beginning to believe, because of the Conservative propaganda program, that the farmers are actually getting too much. I hope these figures which I have quoted will dispel those thoughts.

Earlier this year the minister encouraged production. Even a few days ago he still said he could sell all the wheat that would be available for sale. I have brought along another little booklet from the dominion bureau of statistics called the *Wheat Review* for October, 1962. Obviously our sales so far this year are down, and our supplies at the present time are up. We have 744 million