

The Address—Mr. Fair

namely to have an investigation into that industry also because, as has been pointed out, we have had very wide fluctuations in the prices paid for hogs on the different markets throughout this country. But when you go to the butcher shop to buy a particular part of the hog you do not realize that there has been any fluctuation whatever. This is not good enough. This is one of the reasons our cost of living is up where it is at the present time. Perhaps the packers, the implement manufacturers, the manufacturers of electrical appliances, and many others of these groups should be investigated by our prices committee.

I was really pleased with the announcement made by the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) today in connection with the final price to be paid by the wheat board. However, I was not so well satisfied with the manner in which it came out. We find that regardless of the number of times an opposition member asks for this information, when it is about ready to be handed out apparently a question is given to some government member so he can get the information supplied by the minister. However, regardless of what certain people have said against the wheat board, some of them in this house, I feel that it has done a really good job in spite of government policy. What I mean about government policy is that the wheat board has been compelled to sell wheat to millers to be milled into flour for Canadian consumers at a price that will likely average about 50 cents a bushel below what the wheat board has been able to obtain for grain which we know as class II sold to countries outside the international wheat agreement.

The international wheat agreement as it stands at the present time is not working out very well in favour of the wheat producers. Again I want to bring to the attention of the house the suggestion made by the hon. member for Acadia (Mr. Quelch) when this agreement was under discussion a couple of years ago. He asked that the price of wheat be tied to the price of goods in the country importing our wheat, thus having a fluctuating price that would take full cognizance of the cost of production. If that were done we would not have the losses that are sustained at present under the agreement.

The Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) told us that No. 1 wheat will average \$1.85498. That is getting it awfully close to the maximum, and I am personally pleased with the result of the wheat board

operations. On a number of occasions, as have all this group, I have praised the operation of the wheat board, and as long as I am here I intend to support that organization. But I feel it would be much better if it were not compelled to mix in other government policy with its own operation. The job of the board is to get the best possible price it can for the products entrusted to its care. In my opinion they have done quite well. Many people are trying to get back to that old gambling den, the grain exchange. The farmers of the three prairie provinces should be very wary when this question comes up. Perhaps I should place on *Hansard* something I clipped from the *Manitoba Co-operator* of November 15, which reached my office this morning. The heading is:

Sleep came harder with a bare larder
(Cogitator's Nightmare)

The best grade of wheat in the world, No. 1 northern, sold for 23½ cents per bushel! Fantastic—you say, but it's true. No. 2 C.W. oats returned 9½ cents per bushel. Maltng barley returned 17 cents per bushel at a point with a freight rate to the Canadian lakehead of 18 cents per 100 pounds.

I might break off here and state that at the point at which I farmed the freight rate was 26 cents a hundred, so you can take 5 cents a bushel off wheat and 2 cents a bushel off oats in respect to the prices that I have already quoted. That means that in 1932 wheat sold at my shipping point for 19 cents a bushel. That was the amount we received for the best wheat grown in the world. I continue with the quotation:

Rye was worth 15 cents a bushel, and flax 50 cents a bushel. These were not necessarily the lowest prices received by the producers.

Prices referred to here were quoted December 16, 1932. There was no one to absorb the hedges, and the market sagged. Elevator agents bore the brunt of criticism, yet elevators were apparently paying all that the market would permit. The speculator who was so staunchly supported by the advocates of the open market, as a necessary factor in absorbing the farmers' hedges, was apparently Christmas shopping. In any event, he was not on the job when he was so badly needed.

What guarantee is there that the speculator would not again take an unannounced holiday?

The following tabulation is self-explanatory:

Official list prices paid per bushel at country elevators under price list No. 115, dated December 16, 1932, for points with freight rate to Fort William of 18 cents per 100 pounds.

I am just going to quote the top grades in each: No. 1 hard wheat, 23½ cents a bushel; oats, 2 C. W., 9½ cents a bushel; rye, 2 C. W., 15 cents a bushel; flax, 1 C. W., 50 cents a bushel; barley, 3 C. W., 14 cents a bushel. If I could have permission of the house I