

Grain

from members of the opposition about a particular point in their present panic in respect of the immediate situation with regard to wheat. I should like to go over the history of their panic tonight and take a look at what they do, what they accomplish and how they fail so greatly to serve the people whom they ought to be serving best.

First of all I wish to draw the attention of the hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski) to the complete inappropriateness of his use of the word "stagnant" to describe the grain movement situation. I might point out to him that "stagnant" is defined by the dictionary as "becoming motionless, having no current, ceasing to flow".

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. Is the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond (Mr. MacInnis) rising on a point of order?

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Yes, Mr. Speaker. My point of order arises from the disagreement by the Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Lang) with the use of the word "stagnant" which is in the motion put forward by the hon. member for Mackenzie. In so doing the minister is reflecting on the decision of the Chair to allow this debate to take place. Any reflection on the wording of a motion which has been accepted by the Chair is certainly a reflection on Your Honour in occupying that position. I would ask that the minister withdraw the remark.

Some hon. Members: Withdraw.

Mr. Lang (Saskatoon-Humboldt): The hon. member for Mackenzie used the word in circumstances which are clearly and completely inappropriate in view of the facts. I should like to point out once again that wheat exports in fact are higher this year than they were at the same time a year ago. They total 125.4 million bushels this year compared with 103.7 million bushels last year at the end of December. I wish to point out also that so far as the Vancouver situation is concerned shipments in the crop year from August 1 to December 31 from the Pacific coast totalled 56.9 million bushels compared with 33.8 million bushels in the previous year. Does this look like stagnation to the hon. member?

I point out to the hon. member that notwithstanding the answer which the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin) gave to him yesterday about carloadings he repeated the same insufficient information which he had before him. From

August 1 to January 17 carloadings to Vancouver totalled 44,165 cars compared with 38,211 cars in the same period in the previous year. Does this look like a slowdown or stagnation?

• (11:40 p.m.)

It is completely clear that this has been a difficult harvest year and that there were very important things to attend to in getting damp grain to the terminals. It was important that those who have responsibility in this regard, like the Wheat Board which was under severe attack by opposition members tonight, should take this question and give it serious attention. They did this with the result that drying facilities now operate on a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week basis drying grain. Let me point out to hon. members opposite the manner in which the Wheat Board has in recent days calculated the wheat which still remains to be dried, and the way in which it has drawn to the attention of the farmers specifically what they could do in the way of drying grain and what the farmers must do themselves.

I should now like to point out to members opposite the nature of the general panic over the days, weeks and years. Let me draw to their attention respectfully the damage they do to the western agricultural industry by this kind of action. This year they talked about the panic as a result of their feeling that grain was going to stay under the snow. Sometimes they panic because it rains too much, and sometimes they panic because it rains too little. They panic always, and ask the government to do something.

After these people got over the panic about the harvest they began to panic about damp grain conditions. While panicking about this they began to panic about the quota system being even. They panic about low grain sales and they panic about demurrage being payable when the Wheat Board is carrying out its proper responsibility in attempting to maximize sales. The Wheat Board must take the appropriate risk that demurrage might be payable. This is a risk the Wheat Board deems to be appropriate from time to time in order to maximize sales. The Wheat Board goes all out to make sales, but members opposite begin to panic about demurrage.

Not only does this constant attitude by members opposite upset the efforts of the Wheat Board to sell grain abroad, it does something at home. They call for government help for farmers on every occasion when