

elevators throughout western Canada. In other words, it was owned by other people than the farmers at that time.

Hon. A. L. BEAUBIEN: Only 45 per cent of the coarse grains had been sold then.

Hon. Mr. HAIG: But the rest was held by the farmers themselves and it was not for sale. My honourable friend knows very well that every farmer keeps a certain part of his coarse grains for his own use.

Hon. A. L. BEAUBIEN: I understood the statement to be that 80 per cent of the coarse grains had been sold by that time.

Hon. Mr. HAIG: I said, 80 per cent of the quantity that the farmers had for sale.

We are asked to approve the continuation of the Agricultural Products Act for another four months. If parliament had not been convened before the end of the year the act would automatically have continued in force for sixty days after the session opened in the New Year, or until the 31st of March, 1948, whichever date happened to be the earlier; but as things are the act will expire on the 31st of December unless the motion now before us is passed. We did not need to be called here now at all, and for the life of me I cannot understand why we were called. The government has given a mighty fine opportunity to the three opposition parties in the other house to talk and talk and talk.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: Is that not their right?

Hon. Mr. HAIG: Yes, but the government did not expect to have all that talk at this time. It would have done better by waiting for further developments, until it was known what effect the Marshall plan would have on conditions in Europe, and what advantage if any Canada was to derive from that plan. I repeat that I cannot understand why the session was opened at this time.

As a member of this house and a representative of western Canada, I protest against government control of the farm products of this country.

Hon. A. L. BEAUBIEN: Honourable senators, certain remarks of the leader opposite (Hon. Mr. Haig) compel me to rise, but I do not intend to speak at any length. First let me say that it is something new to hear the honourable gentleman placing so much emphasis on editorials in the *Winnipeg Free Press*. In the past my honourable friend and his party have never seemed to think much of what that paper said about politics or anything else, because they claimed the paper

opposed them, but today it would appear that the main part of his speech is drawn from its editorials.

My honourable friend suggested that Mr. Wesson was really the father of the wheat agreement. I do not think my honourable friend seriously intended to cast any reflection upon the abilities of one who, in my opinion, is the best Minister of Agriculture Canada has ever had, the Honourable Mr. Gardiner. The minister has taken full responsibility for this wheat contract.

I say to my honourable friend that not only the wheat pool but all farm organizations favour the contract with the United Kingdom. I speak from personal knowledge, for I have a close contact with farm organizations. I live on my farm and I associate with farmers every day in my life when I am not here. I venture to say that when this contract was entered into with Great Britain for the quantity of wheat specified, 90 per cent of the farmers of western Canada were in favour of it. Why? Because it gave them stability. They knew what price they were going to get for their wheat over a certain period of time, and they were able to plan their activities accordingly.

Let me remind my honourable friend that when the Canadian Wheat Board Act was passed in another place his party voted in favour of it. And the present leader of the Conservative party, before he held that office, was always in favour of a stable price for farm products so that farmers would know exactly where they stood. Why has my honourable friend's party changed its position? Because it thinks it may gain some political advantage with the farmers. The Conservatives also say they are in favour of the grain exchange, but not too much so, because they favour the wheat board too. They are trying to please farmers on both sides.

Honourable senators, I do not say that the farmers would not like to receive more for their commodities. But I have spent 65 years of my life in the western country and I know that what the farmers have been always wanting is a stable market, so that they would know definitely what they were to get for every bushel of wheat produced. And they have never been better off than they are today. I strongly resent the pessimistic attitude of my honourable friend opposite, and his sympathy that appears all at once for the farmers. His party has never before been so much concerned over the farmers.

Hon. Mrs. FALLIS: Will the honourable gentleman permit a question?

Hon. A. L. BEAUBIEN: With pleasure.