

On the other hand, the Government and the Wheat Board are taking all measures within their power to maintain markets for Canadian grain and to prevent demoralization of prices. Let me indicate some of the things that are being done.

Members of the Wheat Board and officials of my Department are visiting all Canada's major markets for grain. Within the last few weeks the following countries have been visited; Japan, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Italy, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland. The visits are intended to supplement the selling efforts of Canadian Trade Commissioners, who are resident in every wheat and flour market throughout the world.

As part of the sustained effort to build up and maintain markets for Canadian grain, the Wheat Board has been inviting representatives from grain consuming interests to come to Canada, to see how grain is grown, inspected and handled. The cost of these visits is borne out of unclaimed balances in old pool accounts of the Wheat Board. Since this scheme was inaugurated months ago, visitors have come from: the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, Venezuela, Ecuador, Ireland, Switzerland, Peru, Colombia and Brazil.

Although the Wheat Board sells only for cash, the Canadian Government has in a few instances assisted in the sale of quantities of wheat on credit terms by insuring the outstanding credits. As a result, over the past two or three years,  $9\frac{1}{2}$  million bushels have been sold to Yugoslavia and  $7\frac{1}{2}$  million bushels to Brazil. This year negotiations were completed for the insurance of a maximum of  $9\frac{1}{2}$  million bushels of number 5 wheat to Poland. To date, that country has taken up about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  million bushels. These transactions are exceptional, to meet exceptional cases. Most countries, of course, prefer to pay cash, in order to avoid the insurance and interest charges.

As far as prices are concerned, the Wheat Board has met the competition. On the other hand, it has refused to be panicked. It has refused to put its wheat on the auction block, to be knocked down to the highest bidder. If the Wheat Board had gone in for that sort of selling, which it has sometimes been urged to do, and which from time to time the United States seems to be doing, there would indeed have been chaos. I shudder to think of the consequences.

The Canadian Wheat Board cannot, of course, ignore the competition. It cannot afford to maintain an umbrella over its competitors, and watch them walk away with Canada's traditional markets. It will not do so. But what I am convinced it should do, and what it has been doing, is to act as a stabilizing influence on world markets.

In the last crop year, Canada exported 252 million bushels of wheat, including wheat in the form of flour, about the same quantity as in the previous crop year. I had hoped for better results, because of the rather poor quality crops in Europe in 1954. In fact, in the early part of last crop year we were selling wheat at a rate which indicated a probable total export in the vicinity of 300 million bushels. But, in the spring, sales began to taper off quickly, as the United States, by its "give-away" program, began to eat into markets which, on a price basis and under fair competitive conditions, Canada would have supplied. Nevertheless, we did export 252 million bushels, which, together with domestic disappearance of 165 million bushels accounted for an average crop and enabled us to reduce our carryover of wheat on the first of August this year by nearly 100 million bushels.