

Hon. Mr. Haig: Certainly. I live in a city: why should I not pay a reasonable price for the wheat from which my bread is made? Why should the farmer out in the country pay for my bread? Will you, as a farmer, tell me why he should do it? One has as much right to go to your province and say, "Mr. Senator, I will not buy your potatoes for \$1 a bushel for seed, I will pay only 50 cents, because Haig needs potatoes for seed in Manitoba and wishes to get them cheap."

Hon. Mr. Sinclair: I am not arguing the point; I am just asking how your figures are arrived at.

Hon. Mr. Haig: Well, I am telling you.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: May I ask another question, because I am very much interested. The honourable senator claims that the farmers have lost \$500 million on wheat. Is he basing his opinion on the assumption that there is no money in the hands of the Wheat Board today to be distributed to the farmers?

Hon. Mr. Haig: Having figured the amount which the Wheat Board sold on the world market, and the price they received, I say that the total money in their hands is \$78 million. That is all there is. In the first year they paid \$1.35 a bushel and they got \$1.55; the difference of 20 cents per bushel is in their hands too, but it is the farmers' money. I have allowed for every cent that the farmer will now get or has ever got. The only item of which I am ignorant is what was left over in 1945, and I have no way of getting that information.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: My honourable friend will admit that we do not know what the farmer is going to get when the final winding up of the contract takes place.

Hon. Mr. Haig: That has all been taken into account.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: It would reduce his loss.

Hon. Mr. Haig: I have considered all that. On the 77.8 million bushels they sold to the world, the government granted the farmer only \$1.35; but I took into account the value of that wheat—\$2.44 in 1946 and \$2.88 in 1947. I have covered all that. I know there is money in the pool to that extent. I know, as the commissioner says that they sold so many millions of bushels, but the whole thing boils down to this: The people ask me "Wasn't it a good thing to sell wheat to Britain for \$1.55?" and I answer "Yes, certainly." But if the farmers of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta sell their wheat to the British people, why should the rest of us boast and say: "Didn't we do well by Great Britain?". We would be entitled to take the credit if we

paid back to the farmers of Western Canada—and we know who they are, because the government has a record of every one of them—the losses they suffered. First, for the 75 million bushels sold to the people of Canada we should certainly pay what the wheat was worth, and second, we should pay the difference between \$1.55 and \$2.44 in 1946 and \$1.55 and \$2.88 in 1947.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: May I ask the honourable senator another question? Would he explain to the house why organizations representing western Canadian wheat growers—pools and elevators—have endorsed these contracts?

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: They are the ones that told the government to do it.

Hon. Mr. Haig: Yes, and they listened too. I would not be speaking here today as I am if I did not believe that the farmer will wake up in about three or four months—

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: Who is going to wake him up?

Hon. Mr. Haig: He is waking up now. He is disturbed because the 1949-50 wheat contract does not take into account the losses he suffered in other years. Let me tell you that he is "hollering plenty". My honourable friends opposite would have laughed at me had I told them that the money the government was squandering in Digby-Annapolis-Kings would not bring them good returns. I did not think it would, and I do not think this will. I am persuaded that the farmers of western Canada will bitterly resent the blind alley into which Mr. Gardiner and his cohorts have led them through the years.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: May I ask the honourable senator another question?

Hon. Mr. Haig: You have asked enough questions already. You had an opportunity to air this thing in Portage la Prairie, but the people did not listen to you; and you will have exactly the same experience next summer.

I had planned to say something more about the grain situation, but perhaps I have said enough. I want to apologize to the house for taking up so much time. With the exception of the members from the Prairie Provinces—I do not say this in an insulting manner—honourable senators do not understand the importance of this problem to our people. I will admit, of course, that I cannot become very enthusiastic about the potato situation in New Brunswick. Likewise, I do not understand the many details of the various problems affecting Ontario and Quebec, and I do not fully appreciate the difficulties encountered by the lumbermen of British Columbia. But I do know something about wheat, and