

Business of Supply

trusted all right, but we do not see or hear anything of them. I have heard it said that as a person goes through life he is lucky if he has one trusted friend. The Prime Minister is exceptionally lucky; he has 30. But why does he not listen to those who sit around the Privy Council table? I do not find fault because he listens to the people he trusts—I do not mind that at all—but he does not have to believe them and pass on their advice.

This is not a phony issue, Mr. Speaker, but one of the most important before this country today.

Mr. Dinsdale: Hear, hear.

Mr. Gundlock: It is not confined to western wheat or grain growers; it is felt all across the country. One has only to read the newspapers from coast to coast to learn that the trouble in this very important area of the Canadian economy is making itself felt in other facets of our economy.

The minister goes across the country making speech after speech, saying the same thing. On December 1 he said that the Wheat Board had maintained Canada's position in world exports. I do not know where he gets his figures. Honest and worth-while contributions have been made in this House. We on this side do not oppose simply for the sake of opposition. Many good suggestions have been brought forward, but the government does not listen to them. Indeed government members are not even in their seats there is only one minister here this afternoon.

Mr. Baldwin: Shame.

Mr. Gundlock: They are the party with the mandate of the people, and I repeat—I only wish the people could see that they gave their mandate to empty seats.

Mr. Dinsdale: They would be awfully disillusioned.

Mr. Gundlock: The minister talks about blocks of cars. I do not know what it is, but it is supposed to be a great improvement in the shipping of grain. However, the rapeseed growers are having trouble moving a very small amount compared with the wheat involved. Where is the block system and where is the improvement, Mr. Speaker?

I should like to remind the minister that I am a farmer and I have not had a quota on my farm for nearly a year. But still he talks about equalizing quotas. This does not make sense to me and I think I have very good

[Mr. Gundlock.]

reason to speak about it. I ask the minister through you, Mr. Speaker, why there has not been a quota on my farm since last May.

Mr. Lang: Did you get your deferred delivery permit?

Mr. Gundlock: I am talking about the quota. There has not been a quota on my farm since last May. What can we do without quotas when we are supposed to deliver wheat and other grains under the quota system? I should not have to spell it out, but I suggest that the system is run on financing, borrowing money at 9½ per cent, whereas the average rate of interest paid—and I know whereof I speak—is about 15 per cent. After two or three years of not selling the product, this not only creates a hazard but makes it darned hard to live.

● (5:40 p.m.)

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) went to Chatham and set out some guidelines. I think he is the one who is being guided. He said:

We in the federal government do not make trade decisions based primarily on one commodity or class of commodity. The people of Canada demand and rightly so that we should take into account the interests of the entire Canadian economy and make what is, on balance, the best decision.

The government does not take any one commodity or any one facet into consideration. I refer to the automobile pact, with which we are all very familiar so I need not go into detail. If that pact does not take into consideration one particular facet of our economy, I should like to know what does. Another example with which we are familiar is the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. Although we are discussing the Canadian economy and the grain producers of Canada, I think it is pertinent to consider this example. As I understand it, the Department of Regional Economic Expansion is financed to the tune of nearly \$5 billion. Again, that department will be involved with a special part of the economy. Yet when we raise in the House one of the most important issues affecting the economy of Canada, we are met with deaf ears and empty seats.

Just four years ago wheat was our No. 1 export. A few months ago it was about fourteenth, and where it stands today I shudder to think. When an important facet of the economy such as wheat deteriorates so quickly, what are we to do? I suppose because I am in the opposition no one will expect me to offer suggestions, but I raise two points. First, I