

*Wheat Prices*

secure a better return for producers, is a worthy one which I share. Clearly, I believe the price of domestic wheat should rise to a least \$10 per bushel, but I do have a lot of difficulty with the concept of parity and all the complications which seem to attach to it, many of which were addressed in that debate. It is not my intention to debate the meaning of "parity" here. My notice of motion is simple and straightforward. It is directed at the domestic selling price of wheat used for million purposes. It can be a very simple program to administer and to implement and, in keeping with the rules pertaining to private Member's activity, it will not result in any cost to the Government.

The proposal, however, is not without some problems. I fear that the intermediaries between the farmer and consumer will seize the opportunity, as they have done in the past, to piggy-back substantial price hikes on to the wheat price increase. It would, therefore, be most desirable if the industry would restrain itself in these circumstances to simply passing on the wheat price increase to the consumer without building on to it. Should this motion be passed today, it would be the task of the committee to hear the various points of view on this.

Another problem area relates to imported wheat products into Canada and our exports to the United States. Obviously, some of our trade could be jeopardized and there would be an increased demand in Canada for imported wheat products, particularly on the west coast. This would be another area for the committee to address.

I noted with interest the proposal put forward by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Shellenberger), during the debate on Bill C-215 wherein he spoke of placing some sort of retail tariff on baked goods. While there may be some constitutional and legal impediments to this, again I believe the concept is worthy of study by the committee.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate my belief that the farmer is the backbone of the country. There is no other sector which pays full measure for all to its inputs and yet has no say whatsoever on the price of its products. Since time began the farmer has paid the full price for combines, trucks, automobiles, and tractors. He pays full price for manufactured products and processed foods. In fact, he often pays more than the full price for many items such as clothing and shoes which have been protected by subsidization, quotas, and tariffs. All the farmer wants is his cost of production plus a reasonable profit. There is no other business or industry in Canada that does not require the same thing. How else can they stay in business?

Producers are interested in a fair price. They are not talking about forcing bread prices sky-high so that children will starve. Consumers in Canada pay less than in any other country in the world, save one. We ask a fair price today to avert problems tomorrow, both in terms of price and supply. Mr. Speaker, the subject matter of this motion is intentionally quite narrow. It is not an omnibus Bill which is difficult to deal with. It is concerned with wheat, specifically the approximate-

ly 10 per cent of Canadian wheat production that is consumed in Canada by humans. It is not concerned with any vague concept of parity. It simply addresses the need to bump up the domestic wheat price as a shot in the arm to help save a productive sector of Canadian agriculture, the sector which faces a vicious cost-price squeeze.

I do not intend to use all of my time, Mr. Speaker, because I want to hear from representatives of the other Parties and, hopefully, to have a vote on this motion. I would like to close by saying that there is nothing unduly complicated about this matter, other than to avoid undue mark-ups in the processing and distribution of baked goods, thus to ensure that the consumer will see every cent of the proposed increase accrue to the benefit of the Canadian producer, those same producers who, in other better times, have heavily subsidized the consumer. I, therefore, respectfully ask all Parties to honour the spirit of parliamentary reform and to recognize the desperate plight of agriculture by supporting this motion for the establishment of a committee to bring in a Bill to provide for a higher domestic wheat price.

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Member for Swift Current-Maple Creek (Mr. Wilson) for bringing to this House the excellent motion that he did. If I have any reservations about the motion they are not about the mover or his intention, but about what will happen to this motion assuming that Tory members of the House will not talk it out and will allow it to go to committee. Recalling the debate which took place only moments ago in this House, Mr. Speaker, it is only too clear to all of us that, notwithstanding the spirit of parliamentary reform to which the Hon. Member for Swift Current-Maple Creek referred earlier, and notwithstanding the good intentions of Members on all sides of the House, many times our good intentions are lost. They are lost because, even though we sometimes pretend to have the spirit of reform, many times the parliamentary system is run by the wishes of a Government official, of a cabinet Minister, or of the Prime Minister against the wishes of the vast majority of the Members of the House. I say this to remind the Hon. Member not to raise his hopes too high even though I believe his motion is quite acceptable and one that all Canadians would easily accept.

• (1620)

I am a strong supporter of marketing boards and supply management in this country to ensure that our agricultural sector remains vibrant. Therefore, I can assure the Hon. Member that I support his motion and that I want the retention of our institutions which have been established to provide for fair and worth-while marketing of our agricultural products both domestically and externally.

The farmers of my constituency do not grow wheat but many other products that are regulated through various systems of supply management and other means. They are worried that with the Government's present spirit of deregulation they may be abandoned in the process. I trust that rather than being deregulated or lost, our agricultural sector will be