

Grain

Western farmers to ship their grain to Eastern Canada. If we could achieve that end, it might check separatism, which is feared by several hon. members, because it is no use preaching to a hungry man. At the present time, Eastern farmers are miserable on their parcel of land, because they do not think it possible that this grain which could be sold at a lower price in Eastern Canada, will one day bring them some profit.

• (9:00 p.m.)

They will have nothing to do with socialism, with a government that controls and they do not want to be told one of these days to do such or such a thing. Indeed, there is proof of that in the fact that they objected to the renting of the Quebec elevators to an American company that probably created some of the problems concerning grain exports. We lost, as was said in the motion today, 17,000 tons of cereals that could have been sold and such a sale would no doubt have contributed to our country's prosperity.

But because justice is being denied, because the economic power of electoral funds dictates the course followed by the parties in power—Tories or Grits, they are of the same making because they go to the same source to get elected—it is possible the day after the elections, with a majority government, to have laws passed that encourage those financiers and bring about disasters like the one we are witnessing now in Canada.

I will therefore keep on reading the article I quoted a while ago, giving you a few more details on what we are going through at present in eastern Canada, when we would have liked so much to help the people in western Canada. People may think what they want, but we are ready in Quebec to help our fellow citizens. We are ready to assist other Canadians who, as everybody knows, also want to make reasonable profit and benefit from the income of their farm, which would enable them to live decently, in a democratic way. Now problems like the one in the Vancouver harbour are created, which shows that when the government rented the Quebec grain elevators to an American company, it not only created storing problems, but also contributed to increase the control of American companies over the Canadian economy. In fact, a spokesman for the Federated Cooperative said one day: If we had not been here, our control on grain would have been done for. An American company

was then coming to Eastern Canada to control the distribution of grain and this is the effect that we must bear today while we have to tackle problems like the one in which we are involved at this time. I shall read further the article to which I referred earlier:

It must be noted that up to the end of the 1966 shipping season about half a dozen shippers were competing with the Quebec market; this was the best guarantee for the local consumer that he would get the most reasonable offer.

At the end of the 1968 shipping season, there was only Bunge with the exception of one or two other shippers, who were moving grain to the Quebec elevators. The tenant systematically discouraged the shippers, as well as the shipping companies, from going to Quebec to unload the domestic grain—

It is not surprising that we should know the problems which are ours today.

—because he was trying to impose conditions forcing the shippers to give him three days notice before the loading of the ship at the Great Lakes ports, to give the name of the ship, the quantity, the grade of the grain and the date of arrival of the ship in Quebec.

With such information, the tenant could get in Quebec an advantage on the market by adjusting his price in order to compete in the best possible conditions.

A permit was issued by the Canadian Board of Grain Commissioners under section 134 (1) of the Canada Grain Act with different clauses.

This brought about more confusion at the elevator because the permit itself was interpreted in an ambiguous way by the Canadian Board of Grain Commissioners.

In a brief about the Quebec elevator, Mr. V. Martin, secretary and executive manager stated, for instance, "Bunge is allowed, though under no obligation, to take a ship out of turn. On the other hand, if a ship turns up, and there is no other one in line, and there is room in the elevator, Bunge has to unload the boat without any consideration for other plans or commitments.

In October, one of Bunge's competitors on the local market in Quebec, taking into account the above mentioned conditions, sent a boat to Quebec with 960,000—

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired.

[Translation]

Mr. Dumont: Just a few minutes more, Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[English]

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): I must say, Mr. Speaker, that the last speech has cheered me