

Supply—Agriculture

selling agency. Farm organizations have had experience of this type of selling in the past. The farmers lost large sums of money and as a better method they have supported the Canadian wheat board. I suggest that they will support the Canadian wheat board and that anything done with regard to a selling agency must be done for the purpose of strengthening the Canadian wheat board, and in no way setting up anything that might be termed an alternate organization.

Then the minister went on to talk about this fund for losses that he had in mind. What did he say? He said, in so many words, that he was running into great difficulty in the cabinet getting additional money for additional credit sales. This is the thing that goes through his speech sentence after sentence. So many ministers in the cabinet have had trouble with the Prime Minister recently. Over the last few months and the last few years the attitude of the Prime Minister toward his colleagues in the cabinet, I suggest, is leading to the destruction of the Conservative party as the government of this nation when the next election comes along. The Prime Minister has no confidence in the Minister of Agriculture. He said this does not represent government policy. Certainly the Minister of Agriculture has no confidence in the Prime Minister. He hid his speech from the Prime Minister; he did not show his speech to the Prime Minister. But he went out and said a lot of things to the farm organizations. He said:

It was not an easy or simple matter to attain approval for these credit levels—

He had a tough time in the cabinet; this self-appointed hero of the west is having such a difficult time with his Prime Minister. He went on:

—and I must advise you that it will become infinitely more difficult to obtain approval for higher levels—

He suggested the setting aside of a portion of the final wheat payment with a view to building up a fund which would be used in sharing any loss which may occur. Then he went on to say:

I wish to make it perfectly clear that I am not suggesting that farmers take the entire risk—

Not all of it.

—of a loss on a credit sale. I have no exact share in mind—possibly this can attract reaction in principle to the basic suggestion.

Isn't that something? "You agree to pay the loss and I will decide whether it is to be 50 per cent or 95 per cent of the loss after you have agreed to the principle." That is really powerful negotiation. Then he went on to say:

Believe me, if farmers are willing to approve such an arrangement—

[Mr. Argue.]

And this was, of course, his whole purpose in doing it:

—it will make my task so much easier if I am able to say to my colleagues that farmers are willing to consider sharing the risk of credit sales.

The great opposition to increased credit sales today, in the words of the Minister of Agriculture himself, come from his cabinet colleagues. I suggest that the farm organizations—and I shall be talking about this after the luncheon recess—have shown in place after place that they reject and repudiate the effort of the Minister of Agriculture to put upon their shoulders the losses that may be sustained from government policy.

Mr. Chairman, may I call it one o'clock?

At one o'clock the committee took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The committee resumed at 2.30 p.m.

Mr. Argue: Just before the lunch recess I was saying it was obvious from the statement made by the Minister of Agriculture in Regina that he was experiencing great difficulty in getting further credit sales past the cabinet. I think this is an indication, as yesterday, when the Prime Minister made a long statement to this house on another matter, that the real prime minister of this country, though he has not the title, sits in the other place. And I do not think that this administration directed from the other place will be any more successful than was the administration in 1896 when a Conservative prime minister operated this country from a seat in the Senate.

Nothing which has been done by this government in recent years has created so much opposition as the recent statement of the Minister of Agriculture. I have in my hand the *Regina Leader-Post* of Friday, November 23 in which a survey is made of farmers and farm organizations. Not a single farmer referred to in this survey supported the suggestions made by the Minister of Agriculture. As a matter of fact, according to the *Leader-Post*:

—delegates to a wheat pool meeting in Moose Jaw on Wednesday night went on record as opposing Mr. Hamilton's suggestion that a portion of the final payment on wheat be retained for a credit sales back-up fund.

Mr. G. R. Warrington, wheat pool delegate for Turtleford, had this to say. According to him:

—reactions to the proposals appear "not too favourable" on the credit fund and mixed on the selling agency proposal.

I think that while it is important to criticize any statements which appear not