

Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act

believe these things prove one point. No matter how you look at it, the farmer in western Canada seems to be getting a rougher and rougher deal all the time.

I do not wish to take up too much more time. Much has been said in this debate and much more probably will be said by other members. I want to beg and plead with the government that they really explore some new avenues and alternatives in order to restore the confidence the people once had not only in the government but also in politicians, especially when these politicians refer to the basic issues which concern the people themselves and the livelihood of the people.

Mr. R. E. McKinley (Huron): Mr. Speaker, members of this chamber may wonder at my participation in the debate on second reading of Bill C-162, a bill to help the prairie farmers receive funds for the drying of grain. My interest is not very difficult to understand because I can remember quite well back in the years 1956 and 1957 when the grain was piled high in the west. Then, all the western farmers took to feeding that grain and glutted our livestock market in eastern Ontario which we more or less consider to be our market to help us keep the eastern agricultural people in a prosperous position. I remember that very well. It was not until 1957 when another government took office that things were rectified to a certain extent. I believe that even today the agricultural people consider the Conservative party to be their friend.

● (3:40 p.m.)

I welcome this legislation and the assistance it will provide in alleviating the problem in western Canada in respect of grain drying. This grain must be dry if it is to be exported. If it is not to be exported, it will be used as feed for livestock. If that is done the cattle will be a glut on an already full market in eastern Canada. Transportation is such that this beef can be transported very easily from western Canada to eastern Canada.

Hon. members will remember that a few weeks ago I mentioned there were many dryers available in Ontario, particularly in the constituency of Huron, which could be used for drying some of this grain if someone would co-ordinate the operation. At that time those responsible people opposite suggested that a lack of dryers was not the problem in western Canada, but rather that the problem involved money. One energetic individual in my constituency decided to do something

about the situation and I am happy to report that he has placed a number of dryers from Huron county at the Lakehead. He moved them there on his own initiative, and they are now set up outside the Saskatchewan wheat pool elevators and the Richardson operation. The Richardson people started this operation first, so that is a mark in favour of free enterprise.

This same energetic individual who initiated the use of Huron county dryers at the Lakehead went to Vancouver to find out the situation there. He is familiar with this drying operation because in my riding the farmers dry a lot of corn. This is a normal operation unless the corn is stored on the cob. This drying business is unusual in western Canada. Under ideal harvest conditions western farmers do not have to dry the grain, but at this time there are well over 200 million bushels of damp grain in western Canada. If it is not looked after before the frost leaves it will either spoil or have to be used as feed grain. Surely, we do not want a repetition of the livestock situation which existed in 1956 and 1957.

When this individual went to Vancouver he found a desperate situation. I do not like to criticize the Canadian Wheat Board, as it has done a tremendous job in the past, but like any other body, I suppose it can become careless after being complimented for many years. There is a tremendous apathy in western Canada on the part of those who should be responsible for moving this grain to Vancouver. The president of the wheat board, Mr. McNamara, has indicated to the house through the minister in charge that the problem does not involve dryers but involves money. This is not entirely true. Inspectors from the Board of Grain Commissioners are not available to go out to each farm to make sure that the grain is not dried too fast with a resultant loss of protein quality. I do not think Mr. McNamara has looked into this situation thoroughly. The onus is on him and the board to co-ordinate operations in order to move dry grain from western Canada to the Lakehead and to Vancouver.

The gentleman to whom I have referred discovered that the elevators and storage facilities in Vancouver were filled to capacity. He was prepared to move any number of dryers to Vancouver to assist in drying this grain. Money is being made available to cover the cost of this move. The terminal elevator operators in Vancouver have not faced such a situation in a long time, and the apathy on