

eastern Canada? It is the co-ops and the feed grain agencies. They are buying from brokers on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange and are hosing the hell out of eastern Canada farmers. Everyone knows that. The co-ops are as bad as everyone else. They buy from the brokers and sell for all the market will bear.

There is another problem that has to be solved. If the minister is the least bit interested in the Wheat Board, he will do something about it.

**An hon. Member:** He has gone home.

**Mr. Peters:** He might as well go home. He cannot lose his seat, because he cannot go back to the university. His law is as bad as his knowledge of agriculture, so there is no use talking to him.

**An hon. Member:** The union will protect him.

**Mr. Peters:** I hope so, because he may need it. When the Conservative government gave to the feed mills and large feed lots in western Canada they also sabotaged the Wheat Board. They protested to the Wheat Board about purchases they made on the same basis as anyone else. I am not referring to the small farmer who takes a three-ton load to his neighbour who has a few steers. I am not interested in that. However, as long as stories come out of western Canada about farmers being able to buy grain at 50 cents a bushel because they need their money to buy a new cow or a television set, and therefore operate in their own area on a barter system, it will destroy the support to which the Wheat Board is entitled in both eastern and western Canada.

As far as I am concerned, all agencies, including the feed grain agencies in western Canada, the large feed lots and the eastern feed grain agencies, should be dealing with the Wheat Board. The co-op, or whoever else wants to, can buy from the brokers operating under the Wheat Board. They will be buying under an arrangement which will give them the benefit of a forward price, and the grain can be put into place in eastern Canada.

One major difficulty, of course, is that for six or seven months of the year the St. Lawrence is closed to shipping as far as transportation of feed grains to the east is concerned. The only possibility of using the seaway is confined to a month or so before the freeze-up when buyers are now entitled by law to put into the elevators at Baie Comeau, Prescott and a number of other places a supply which will enable them to guarantee delivery without having to ship by rail to eastern Canada. They are now able to do this. But who are they doing it for? They are doing it for the Co-ops Fédérées, for the Ontario United Co-ops, for Northern Star, the company which started the feed grain agency. This was the agency, in Arnprior, which doubled or tripled the price of feed grains a few years ago, resulting in the study which finally led to the setting up of the feed grain agency in eastern Canada.

It is important that the minister be fair and, much more important—because I have no faith in him—it is important that the three premiers of the western provinces be fair. There are 20 or 30 members from Ontario and 50 or 60 members from Quebec who are directly involved in this issue. If they do not wish to see the members who are

### *Feed Grains*

interested in buying feed grain from western Canada destroy the Wheat Board, if they are not prepared to face this possibility, then they should provide the eastern feed grains board with sufficient power to buy grain so that it can, in turn, store the grain and sell it as required to feeders at reasonable price.

Mr. Speaker, when we are held up in eastern Canada, we cannot help noting the prices which the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier) quoted—prices which eastern farmers have to pay. But these are not the prices the Wheat Board received. They are not the prices the broker paid when he bought at the wheat exchange. The price the farmers had to pay was as much as the feed grain business in eastern Canada felt it could squeeze out of them, and this has been going on for a long time. I suggest to members who represent users of feed grain that they should be particularly interested in seeing that agency buy the grain in western Canada at a fair price, the market price. They should expect a subsidy on storage, which they are now getting. They can expect a subsidy on transportation, which they are now getting. They are also entitled to be assured supplies the price of which does not increase as the season advances. The only alternative is to buy by carload lots, or part carload lots, from the head of the lake, though the cost of transportation is so high that it is not possible to meet competition by this means.

Westerners will also have to consider the needs of eastern Canada. It is my honest opinion that we in eastern Canada can easily be self-sufficient if the need arises. We produce a surplus of corn, and I am sure that if the need becomes great enough, and if the price cannot be sufficiently stabilized, we shall produce sufficient grain for our domestic needs. It is a fact that Ontario presently exports wheat as well as most other cereal crops. Those representing western Canada must see that an agency is established in eastern Canada which will allow for forward purchase and a forward pricing mechanism to provide what we all consider to be a reasonable differential between eastern and western prices and to ensure that we in eastern Canada feel we are getting a reasonable deal and that farmers in western Canada, on the other hand, get the maximum they can for the product they are growing.

I do not think any member from eastern Canada wants to see a war in the feed grain industry, one which would inevitably raise the price, not lower it, and make it much more difficult for orderly marketing to be established. I hope the three premiers in western Canada will bear in mind during the discussions on the Wheat Board that the board may be in serious difficulties, because 70 or 75 members here from eastern Canada are damned interested in western feed grain and at any time we can upset the balance in western Canada. I hope the western premiers will not consider putting us in that position. All we want is equality. All we want is a forward price we can live with, and that is the price which is paid on the grain exchanges in western Canada, the price any other purchaser would pay. But we shall be obliged to demand that our agency has the right to buy, the right to put that grain into storage and the right to exercise some supervision over the colossal profits being made by certain feed companies in eastern Canada.