

*Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act*

privilege. The minister is going to inform me when I am right. When I am not right, I guess he will not inform me.

**Mr. Lang:** You can assume that.

**Mr. Horner:** I did not catch that last remark. It probably is not a point of order either.

**Mr. Boulanger:** Keep going; you are doing well.

**Mr. Horner:** I have the advice of the assistant government whip that I can speak. I am glad that he is making the decisions for Your Honour.

**Mr. Boulanger:** Keep going.

**Mr. Horner:** More advice.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Crowfoot has the floor.

**Mr. Horner:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With these interruptions, one does not really know whether to keep going or not. I want to point out that the government realized the price of barley was too low. In order to get barley delivered to the elevators, they had to increase the price by 10 cents a bushel.

Bill C-239 does not disclose what will be paid to the farmers on delivery. At the end of the crop year, July 31, the government will disclose how much is available under cash advances. In my opinion, that does not lend too much assistance to the farmers. I want to point out what the minister said about this bill, as recorded at page 5491 of *Hansard*. I quote:

The bill before the House to amend the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act is a further step in attempting to rationalize and improve the situation of the grains industry of this country.

The minister admitted that this is a further step to rationalize and improve the grain industry in this country. It is another program. The question we must ask ourselves is whether it is helping. Does it help the farmer or the government? In my opinion, it does not help the farmer. That must be made abundantly clear in this debate. Up until this time, the farmer knew on May 1 what to plant and there was some guidance available. He knew that if he had a surplus, he could get a cash advance of \$1 a bushel for wheat, 70 cents a bushel for barley or 40 cents a bushel for oats. What does he know now? He knows absolutely nothing under this legislation. Is that helping the farmer to rationalize grain production on his farm? It is not. It is helping the government, because it is bailing the government out of a commitment it made some time ago. When we analyze this bill, we find that it guarantees the farmer no advances. However, the interest rate on any advance they take, may go up.

• (4:00 p.m.)

**An hon. Member:** Will go up.

**Mr. Horner:** My hon. friend says it will go up. I hate to say it, but he is right. It is a sure bet that under this government interest rates will go up. The Minister of

[Mr. Horner.]

Agriculture (Mr. Olson) was formerly a member of the Social Credit party. In those days he used to go across the country saying that an interest rate of 2 per cent was high enough, that the banks did not need any more than that; this was what it cost to distribute money. Now, he is part and parcel of an establishment which increases interest rates. He could not remain in the Social Credit party and advocate increased interest rates. Indeed, I do not know whether he will be able to remain for very much longer in the Liberal party, either, taking into account his negative ideas on marketing. He believes that if he controls the supply sufficiently there will be a market for a product, rather than going out and searching for markets. As one of my hon. friends suggests, he will probably go down in history as the coupon king. His legislation outdid Benson and the white paper, and that is a fair strike—a couple of months ago I would have thought it was impossible.

Let us get back to Bill C-239 and what it really means to the farmers. As I said when I began, the minister in charge of the Wheat Board has based his whole approach on an attempt to rationalize and improve the grain industry—I quote his words again. In his attempts to do so he has published papers and articles to the effect that we must eventually reduce the amount of grain in commercial storage. He hopes to get it down to 200 million bushels by 1972. What does this mean? It means there will be increased storage on farms, and less cash in the hands of farmers. We have made great sales this year. I am proud of Canada as a producer for making such great sales.

**An hon. Member:** You just said something right.

**Mr. Horner:** The beaver over there is flapping its tail. We have made great sales as a country and I am proud of that. But it has not registered with the farmers. Try telling farmers in western Canada: Wheat is moving well; we have exported millions of bushels this last month. The farmer scratches his head and says: I have not seen it move off my farm. Why is it still there? It is there because the grain has been moving out of commercial storage and the storage space has not been filled again. There is room for at least 100 million bushels in elevators at the terminal. At the height of the difficulties in Vancouver last month, the elevators were less than half full and boats were waiting.

Why has the government deliberately kept elevators half empty? Is it in line with the program of attempting to rationalize and improve the situation in the grain industry? The minister in charge of the Wheat Board would quickly say yes to that. Even the Minister of Agriculture would say yes. But we should ask ourselves this question: For whose sake are they attempting to rationalize the grain situation?

**Mr. Lang:** For the farmer.

**Mr. Olson:** For the farmer. Get it on the record.

**Mr. Horner:** I got it that time. For the farmer. So they say. But does the farmer want increased interest rates