

Supply—Agriculture

quality. I mention this mainly to point out that when the Board of Grain Commissioners appeared before the agriculture committee they said they were hampered in their investigations of further markets because of the lack of money from the government. Surely this is a very weak excuse. It is a fairly good excuse for the chairman of the Board of Grain Commissioners, but surely the minister cannot honestly say he has gone to bat for the farmers. He should be helping the Board of Grain Commissioners to research more markets. That is why we urged the government to agree to this debate, so as to have an opportunity to try to persuade the minister to re-examine the whole situation. The government made what they thought was an important statement about the reduction of tariffs on dryers, but actually the reduction saved the farmers very little money, if any. Indeed it caused the dealers a great deal of headache because the farmers came to them and asked for refunds.

● (8:10 p.m.)

As I suggested earlier, Mr. Chairman, the government could have purchased these large stationary grain dryers and operated them at various parts of the country where there were insufficient farmer-owned dryers available. This co-ordinating committee, to which reference has been made, could also ensure that this grain is dried properly so as to safeguard the quality of the grain. It is a well known fact that if grain is dried too quickly or at too hot a temperature, its quality may be severely damaged.

May I make just a few comments about the conference next March. The minister said that some 400 people would be invited, 140 of whom would be farm producers. Yet on the steering committee the minister is only permitting the participation—and I use that word because it has a certain significance to that government over there—of two national farm organization representatives. His weak excuse for this is that he told them he would hear from one of them.

Mr. Olson: No, both of them.

Mr. Horner: The minister now says both of them. This is an example of how he confuses the house, Mr. Chairman. Apparently he heard from both of them after he had asked them to select one representative.

Mr. Olson: One nomination from both organizations.

Mr. Horner: That is what I said. I think it is well known in farm circles across Canada that there is a great deal of conflict of opinion as to whether or not Canada should have one national farm organization, or two. It is also well known that there are something like four or five major national farm organizations in the United States. I cannot see why we cannot have two in Canada. But the minister has made no recognition of the fact that there is this conflict of interest between the two farm organizations.

Mr. Olson: Does the hon. member want that carried into the steering committee?

Mr. Horner: Carry it in if you like. If you want my words, take them. I suggest that if the minister is broadminded and wants proper participation in the activities of the steering committee, since 140 delegates out of 400 are producers then the very least number to represent them on the steering committee should be two delegates. As I understand it, the steering committee is going to consist of five members, and I ask the minister whether six members would make it unwieldy, and indecisive, when it comes to deciding how much time should be allotted to each group and how the conference is to be divided up into its various committees. In effect, the minister has told the conference that he has made them a big offer and that it is now up to them to get together.

That is what he told the corn growers when they came to Ottawa. He told them that he could not do anything about their situation, that they had better get together. You can only pass the buck for so long, Mr. Chairman. The minister told the corn growers of southern Ontario that there was no dumping of corn in this country, and then a week or so after he stopped that dumping.

With regard to wheat sales, generally speaking wheat is grown for sale, not for storage. But it must also be recognized that in bumper crop years it is not imprudent to store wheat. The old adage of the Egyptians about storing up in the fat years to meet the needs of the lean years is a sound one, and applies in this case, so long as we remain competitive on world markets.

According to today's *Ottawa Journal* there is a report to the effect—I do not have the report with me, so I cannot use the minister's exact words—that it is difficult for Canadian farmers to maintain their production if they have to compete with subsidized agricultural