

Wheat Acreage Reduction

• (1:10 a.m.)

They never had it so good, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba Wheat Pools got so much a bushel on storage in the country elevators, at the Lakehead, in Vancouver and all the other places, and they never showed a better profit. Why would they oppose the system? It doesn't matter whether they sell wheat. They never had profits so good. No Member of Parliament, nor the minister, if he was honest—and if I was in his position, I would remain silent—would dare in western Canada to attack this situation. It is the family compact, the establishment—Grit establishment. Now a minister has to face this problem. Oh, yes; you attack these people and say they set up the program, but the program should be: Let us do something positive. We should not be telling the farmers in western Canada this, when professors and doctors on the CTV on Sunday night said in 1975 we could face a famine in the world—and Canada has these great resources!

Could I sit in my place and be silent in this situation? How could I? The minister says he has proved it by statistics. We all want to win in our constituencies. I am not interested in that, but I am interested in western Canada, in Canada as a whole, and in the world. We sit around. We are told there will be a famine. But this government, and maybe another party if it were in—we are not the government—would have done it. Maybe this party would have done it. It is time somebody stood up and said something about the grains trade. When two-thirds of the world go to bed hungry, it is time Canada with our resources should not be so selfish as to say we will not grow wheat because we cannot get a certain price, with all our co-ops and wheat pools and all the infiltration government people have—and I know how much they have. They say, "Oh, we cannot stand that kind of politics." That is why the minister has a difficult problem. It is time we grew wheat on every acre of land and sold it to the world.

I will defend the government; I will defend this party—but I will not defend anybody who suggests that we cut down acreage and the growth of wheat. We can sell wheat and we can compete with the world, and we must compete with the world—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired.

[Mr. Woolliams.]

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, as an easterner I have been very interested in listening to the discussion tonight. I agree with much of it. Some of the comments, of course, have been more important than others but I think everyone is very concerned, and rightly so, with the problem that has developed in western Canada. I have been thinking of how you would apply this in eastern Canada. It reminds me of one of my colleagues who said the other day that they were having a great deal of difficulty in one of the automobile industries. I was just thinking that if the minister responsible for the Wheat Board were responsible for our Department of Industry, he would say to the people in Oshawa, "It is difficult to sell cars now. Nearly everybody in the country has a car. Some even have two cars. So we will close down General Motors. It really won't hurt you people. You have been working quite a while; you have paid your unemployment insurance. So sit on your fat fanny and draw unemployment insurance. We won't make any cars this year. Maybe next year." That may be an insurance principle, Mr. Speaker, but I think that some of the workers in western Canada, just like those of General Motors, would decide that maybe they wanted to work.

Maybe they would want to make cars. That is their job, their livelihood, and perhaps they would want to get on with it. I am sure there are many people in western Canada concerned in this way.

Mr. Speaker, another thing that has struck me as interesting is that I see behind this scheme of the minister's, not his own intelligence, because his intelligence is in a different field, but the hand of the man who was behind the national dairy policy. If you will remember, nothing in the national dairy policy was very important. There was to be a subsidy paid to everybody producing milk, and this affected the little farm producing farm separated cream as well as the industrial milker producing skim milk powder and other by-products. The surplus milk that came from the fluid milk industry was subsidized as well.

It was not very long before there was a curtailment of the surplus from fluid milk and it was taken out of the subsidy program. Interesting things began to happen. They decided to set a quota based on the last year's milk production.

If you had not met certain limits last year, you could not apply this year; but if you met