

*Grain*

something was being done and that things were not so bad for the farmers. They gave us assurances that everything possible was being done.

The Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Lang) said we were panicking. Perhaps we are because we are concerned about this problem. I submit that the minister and his associates have had their heads in the sand hoping that the problem would disappear. Now that they have pulled their heads out of the sand, they have found the problem is still with us.

Perhaps our panic has been a good thing because, as the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) has stated, it has stimulated some action. Markets for grain are difficult to find, but this government cannot even meet the few commitments it has made to deliver the grain to whatever markets are available at this time. Ships are anchored at Vancouver but grain is not being loaded. Grain is not moving from the prairies to the coast. There does not appear to be proper co-ordination, and co-ordination is required without question.

Since the onset of this session the government has seen fit to put through several farm bills raising interest rates. I have in mind the farm credit measure and the prairie farm advancements. As a result it feels that the problems have been solved. Government members have sat back in their chairs and patted themselves on the back. I do not think they have any reason to do so. These actions were the result of crises situations and were all short term measures. We must have something better. We should have intermediate and long term plans.

If there have been any intermediate or long term measures, I should like to hear about them from some member of this government. We have given repeated warnings about damp grain but no action has been taken. We have given warnings about the insufficiency in respect of the movement of grain, but no action has been taken. We heard recently the announcement by the Canadian Wheat Board that less than half of the damp and tough grain would be dried and that the other half might be spoiling. Somewhere around 2,500,000 bushels of wheat might possibly spoil. This is a loss our country cannot stand.

The government boasts about having new faces in the cabinet; new men who will present new ideas. These men were supposed to come up with some new answers, but the

farmers are still waiting and the ships are still waiting at Vancouver. We are still waiting to ship our products to our markets.

We are losing our markets and we are being asked to be proud of the way this government is handling the problem. For the benefit of the Minister of Agriculture, who made the request that we should make suggestions rather than just criticisms, let me suggest something which may help to solve this problem. I think the suggestion can be summarized in two key words; communication and co-ordination.

Communication is required between the government, the various agencies associated with the collection of wheat from the producer, those associated with the transport of wheat and those associated with the loading of wheat on ships for markets. Communication is required within this groups, and co-ordination as a result of that communication. I would like to reiterate, for the benefit of the Minister of Agriculture, those two key words—communication and co-ordination. I hope the minister takes them home and thinks about them.

**Mr. John Burton (Regina East):** Mr. Speaker, I have done many things in my life at twelve thirty o'clock at night, but very seldom have I made a speech at this hour. However, I believe this is an important subject to discuss even at this late hour. It is a subject that affects the livelihood of many people in this country, not only those in western Canada but the people in my province and in particular those in the constituency which I represent. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it affects people right across Canada. I think this fact was demonstrated very forcibly this evening when we had a very positive and useful contribution by the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. Winch). He pointed out the situation which exists within his own constituency and noted its impact upon the residents of the heart of the city of Vancouver.

At the outset, I would like to clarify and discuss several points that have come under discussion tonight. First of all, I would like to deal with the point raised by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) in particular, who once again suggested as has been suggested by government members in the past, that whenever any of us on this side of the house dare to ask questions regarding the grain industry of Canada or the activities of the Canadian Wheat Board, we are attacking the Wheat Board and undermining its position.