

Grain—Deficiency Payments

are going to improve agriculture and increase the size of farm holdings so that they will become economic units the farmers have to have capital, and under an improved farm loan system we could lend them money on their ability to earn money. If you lend them money on their security you are just allowing the larger farmers to increase their land holdings.

The hon. member made no mention of the government's export of 300 million bushels of wheat. He did not refer to the fact that perhaps in the long run this would benefit western agriculture. In the very pamphlet he held in his hand it is stated that the average yield per year over the past number of years is 319 million bushels. If we can export over 300 million bushels I say that over a period of years that will tend to do away with the wheat surplus of western Canada, and I think that is one of the main steps in improving agricultural conditions in that part of the country.

I should like to point out to the hon. member that by the statement he made in the house a few days ago he was not helping agriculture, particularly the situation with respect to cattle when he implied that great numbers of cattle would come on the market and prices would fall terrifically. That is a poor attitude for a member of the house to take. I would say it would be better to try to encourage market prices to stay up and not educate the packers to pay less for our cattle, which in a sense is what he was trying to do.

Mr. Argue: Misrepresentation.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): I am not misrepresenting.

Mr. Pallett: The hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Argue) is an expert at that.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): I should like to say a bit more about the Prairie Farm Assistance Act. The hon. member implied that we should increase the levy. I can perhaps go along with him to the extent that if the levy is increased the payments should definitely be increased. But as a farmer in western Canada who has collected P.F.A.A. payments in a good many years I certainly do not want the levy increased unless the payments are increased. I should like to point out that right now the one per cent levy accounts for about half of what is paid out. I certainly would not go along with an increase in the levy unless there is an increase in the payments.

I do not want to take too much of the time of the house. To some extent I agree with the hon. member in respect of deficiency payments but he is wrong when he says that

[Mr. Horner (Acadia).]

nothing is being done about them. Of course I could say that some of the Conservative backbenchers have not been talking too often because we have a leader and cabinet ministers in whom we have faith. We are not like the C.C.F. group. When their leader spoke on a subject a couple of days ago six more members of that group had to get up and say the same thing because they had no respect for their leader's judgment.

Over the past two and a half months that I have been here I have noticed that the new members have a tendency to get to know one another perhaps quicker than they get to know some of the older members, and I can say that I have been surprised at the ability of all the new members I have met. In my opinion it certainly would not take them four years to learn where to hang their hats and coats in the House of Commons. It might take them four minutes. It may have taken some hon. members four years in the past to find out where to hang their hats and coats but not the members of this party.

Mr. E. W. Brunsdon (Medicine Hat): Mr. Speaker, in effect the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Argue) has challenged the 47 new members of the Conservative party from the prairie provinces to say something about wheat. You have heard one reply, Mr. Speaker, from my neighbour and fellow member, the hon. member for Acadia (Mr. Horner). May I say that those of us who come from the prairies and represent agricultural districts are just as keenly cognizant of the wheat problem as is the hon. member for Assiniboia.

It is a strange fact that with representation from the west comprising some 48 members one member should take it upon himself to be the spokesman for the farmers of the three prairie provinces. It is a strange fact that his party should take it upon itself to speak for labour, to speak for the civil service, to speak for the servants of this house and to speak for all other groups in Canada.

An hon. Member: And small business too.

Mr. Brunsdon: In so far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, as a very humble backbencher in a party of which I am very proud, I resent very much the inference that the hon. member for Assiniboia or the other members of his small group can take it upon himself or themselves to be the sole spokesman for a tremendous group of agricultural producers stretching from Manitoba to British Columbia.

He has referred to the wheat problem. The wheat problem did not arise yesterday; it did not arise on March 31, 1958 or in June of 1957. Yesterday we had an opportunity, as