

● (4:30 p.m.)

The Minister of Agriculture does not know what he is talking about. He was trying to sell us a bill of goods, and we, as members of the opposition, are expected to swallow that. I have asked the farmers to whom I have talked on street corners, in little grocery stores and everywhere else, and I find they know better because the situation is different today compared with three or four months ago when the minister first introduced this bill. If we had allowed ourselves to be sucked in by this minister, then the original bill would have been passed. Is protein grading selling our wheat or is it something else? I see the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Douglas) sitting opposite. I want to give him all the recognition that he deserves. He gets a lot of press recognition from the pool. All of a sudden he seems to have advance notice of what is going to happen. Six months ago he said that another statement would be made. We all read the newspapers and the pool reports, but all of a sudden the pools are to be used by this government.

I am not asking for a fight, but if that is what is going to happen I am quite ready to accept a fight. The pools are going to be used by this government, and all of a sudden that has become necessary. I say to the country and I say to the pools that it is certainly not necessary for us. The minister who introduced this bill is being ridden by the other minister who is obviously a step closer to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), because he can tell the Prime Minister that he needs to introduce the bill. He made a statement the other day, and it is very interesting that everyone has fallen for it all of a sudden. As a result of his statement what happened? We lost something. This is typical of the Liberal government. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) throws out a big proposal. Then, everyone bucks against it, and the leader of the Liberal party in Manitoba objects to the whole thing. Everyone in the country is objecting.

Of course, the government will withdraw certain proposals but we will not have gained anything. The farmers in my area are in a difficult position. I will not say anything more about it because I spoke on the subject when the bill was first introduced several months ago. We are going to sell only low grade wheat because we are told that we are in a low grade wheat area. The minister tells us that this measure is advantageous to us. How can it be advantageous when the storage has been reduced. What have we? All we have is low grade wheat. Instead of introducing the bill to the House, the minister should have held discussions with the minister from Saskatchewan. I know that my farmers are going to count their pennies. Until the minister from Saskatchewan made the announcement, we were under the impression that even though the initial payment was to be dropped we would receive a final payment. What will our final payment be now? We will not get it and we do not expect it from this government because when they disguised this whole thing as an equalization payment they left the impression that they were doing something for us.

The minister smokes behind the curtains and grins, because that is all he has left to do. He does not know

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how much longer he will stay in the cabinet unless he puts these bills through the House. He will not stay in the cabinet long because the Prime Minister does not have much use for western farmers.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Olson: That statement is wrong.

Mr. Korchinski: He told us that himself when he was out west. What did he tell us when he went to Regina? Why are they piling up all that wheat in Saskatoon? Why did the hon. member for Assiniboia have to take him into his own back yard to hide him from the rest of the people?

Some hon. Members: Ha, ha.

Mr. Korchinski: That is right, ha, ha. I want to relate my remarks to the statement of the minister from Saskatchewan, because he wants to get rid of the elevators. We have had evidence to the effect that there is no better system of handling grain than through the existing elevators, yet this minister wants to get rid of them. The Minister of Agriculture smiles and laughs. I want that to be on the record.

Mr. Olson: I am laughing at the foolish statement.

Mr. Korchinski: The minister can laugh all he wants, but it was the minister from Saskatchewan who made the foolish statement when he said we could handle our grain with 40 elevators in the west. That is how foolish he was. I am challenging the Minister of Agriculture, and the minister in charge of the Wheat Board, to contradict me right now. The Minister of Agriculture will not do this. I say to the House and to the country that that is what the government wants to do through their system of elimination.

As soon as they remove the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act, every farmer in the country will cry to high heaven because it will cost him money. The farmers will say that the elevator companies will receive all the money, and that is exactly what these fellows want. Let us not be fooled by that suggestion. At one time farmers were getting \$2.12 per bushel for their wheat. What are they getting now? I asked the question the other day. I said to the minister, "The price is 50 cents lower than we were getting a few years ago." Sure, there will be a period when you will pay in, but then all of a sudden it is finished; it is gone forever.

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On top of that, every farmer is to be responsible for every storage payment that is going to be made to every elevator. This provision is in this bill, because that is exactly what the government suggested. Evidence was presented by all the elevator companies that they could handle that grain cheaper than any other method that has been conceived of until now.