

*Business of Supply*

No doubt the minister is studying the most effective methods of transporting, storing and marketing our grain. I am confident everything will be done without undue delay to make the best possible use of all these facilities. I would be surprised if such a study did not reveal the need for more storage facilities at the west coast and possibly overseas. It may well reveal the need for more interior terminals which would dry our grain if necessary, clean it, blend it and prepare it for direct loading into ocean-going vessels for our customers. These interior terminals could receive grain directly from our farm trucks. Enough of them strategically placed could eventually supersede our present elevator system, which with some exceptions, has remained relatively unchanged since trucks came into common use by farmers.

With regard to farm storage payments, I have never been convinced there would be any over-all advantage to farmers if they paid themselves through the Wheat Board for storing grain on their own farms. I am still of that opinion, so long as delivery opportunities remain reasonably equal. On the other hand, recent developments, including the block system of grain gathering and transportation, may result in a continuing inequity in respect of delivery privileges. If this should happen—and we should be able to judge this by July 31—then I say steps should be taken to pay the farmers for their authorized production of grain, with a small holdback, while it still remains on the farm. Furthermore, those farmers who are not allowed to deliver their normal quota should be paid a reasonable amount for storing that grain until it can be accepted.

It is a great temptation to digress and talk about many other farm problems such as the many desirable and necessary changes in the quota system, the expansion of markets, market research and production advice, a more realistic two-price system, what final payment may be expected this spring, and the need to set up separate accounts in the Wheat Board for Durum and bread wheat. Then there is the matter of the cash shortage, the reformation of the Wheat Board, the International Grains Arrangement, and a new grading system.

I hope to persuade the government—and I have already spoken to some members of the government about this—to change the Wheat Board Act, if necessary, in order to make sure the Wheat Board accounts for Durum wheat are kept separate from those for other types

of wheat, so that at least the Durum producers will receive a final payment next spring on their 1968-69 deliveries.

Mr. Speaker, I could talk about all these things but I shall attempt to stay within the terms of the motion before the House. Before I sit down, however, I wish to anticipate some remarks that may be made later, possibly along the line of the remarks made on November 18 in a similar debate by the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters). In effect, he said I should vote against the government if I had the courage of my convictions.

My position is quite clear. This is related to something the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Southam) just said. I was elected as a Liberal and will, the Lord willing, remain a Liberal at least until the next election. But this does not mean I must be silent if I do not agree with the government's actions or lack of action. I have told my constituents, and I firmly believe it, that I can do more for them as a member of the government party. I believe I have accomplished a few things—more than I could have accomplished as a member of the opposition.

I further believe that the Liberal Party, even with its admitted imperfections, will continue to govern this country in the foreseeable future. If I thought I could do a better job in the opposition, I would cross the floor. The parties opposite, I believe, will remain in opposition for a long time and I might look forward to a long and ineffectual career. I submit that the two small opposition parties have no hope of ever becoming the government. The official opposition is so split, and so badly in disarray, that I cannot imagine any revival of their fortunes for many, many years.

I believe I was elected because my constituents wanted a representative on the government side of the House. I shall continue to speak up in the House on matters affecting my constituents whether or not my opinions differ from those of the government. The Liberal Party is big enough to welcome a difference of opinion within its ranks on many subjects. I shall continue to battle for my constituents in the House, in caucus and on every other possible occasion. But I shall not indulge in the foolish luxury of voting against the government and thereby risk alienating the only federal political organization which is in a position now, and will be in my opinion for many years to come, to do something effective to solve our problems.

[Mr. Douglas (Assiniboia).]