

machinery. Sometimes it breaks down in the process of harvesting and the farmer is told that the necessary part is not in stock so he will have to wait. Sometimes he is told that the part is in Toronto or somewhere else, and that they will look for it. This has been a problem in some regions. Some of the dealers I have discussed this with have said that they do not consider it is necessary to keep in stock all farm machinery parts.

● (5:10 p.m.)

The farmer is obviously worried about getting his crop off and he cannot wait several weeks for parts to put his machinery into operation. In this way, indirect pressure is being put on him by the producers of farm equipment to go out and purchase new machinery. This is an underhanded way of selling farm implements to these farmers. It is much like a slap in the face with a hand in a glove, but it still hurts. The farmers cannot avoid this situation, yet they cannot afford to pay the present price of machinery.

Let us just for a moment look at the price of farm machinery as compared with ten, 20 or 30 years ago. I suggest the increase amounts to about 500 per cent. Coupled with this fact is the extremely high rate of depreciation. Many of these farm implements, such as a combine, are only used for about three weeks per year in the fall. After they are used, they are put away and not used again for another year. A farmer may be able to depreciate his farm implements to the extent of \$5,000 in one year. One can appreciate how large a crop yield a farmer must have to withstand that type of situation.

Let me give you another example of the pressure put on farmers by the implement companies. At one time you could purchase a Massey-Harris combine at a cost of \$1,500. This combine did not have a cab. When this implement wore out or had to be replaced the new one included a cab at a cost of an additional \$800 to \$900. The implement companies suggested this additional cost was necessary so the farmer could work in the shade.

Surely the farmers of this country are entitled to know what is going on behind the scenes in this farm implement industry, and the government has a responsibility in this regard. Let the government follow the slogan used on television not so very long ago in respect of winter work programs: "Why wait, do it now". Something should be done about this swindle as soon as possible.

#### *Supply—Trade and Commerce*

Has the minister calculated the amount of debt a young farmer must incur to purchase land and equipment at today's prices, or how many years he must farm at the price of today's production to pay off that indebtedness? I suggest the figures in this regard would be staggering, particularly compared to similar figures of 20 years ago. It is my suggestion that today these farmers are working to a great extent for the producers of farm equipment. They will continue to work for them until such time as they go out of business.

There is a large scale production of wheat in the western part of this country, yet the farmers in that area all have a worried look because of the present situation. Production costs are increasing, yet selling prices in many cases are decreasing. It is my understanding that this year's crops in western Canada are not as good as last year. I am informed that the average yield will be 14 bushels per acre. How many crops would a farmer have to grow with a yield of 14 bushels per acre before he could pay off his indebtedness, or before he closed his doors and quit farming?

A great many farms in Canada today are being purchased on credit, and many farmers have loans to improve their farms. All these farmers are worried about how they are going to remain in farming if the present situation continues to exist. It is easy to say that they now have modern equipment, modern farms and can produce a great deal more with less effort. This does not, however, make up for the tremendous difference in production costs. It is true that with the modern combine, which is self-propelled by 16 cylinders, a farmer can harvest many more bushels per day than with the old type combine. However, cost of this machine is about five times what it was 15 or 20 years ago. The cost of machinery has gone up about 500 per cent but the price of wheat, milk, hogs and eggs has not increased to the same extent. I suggest that farmers' income has been pretty well stable, although in some cases it has gone down. Surely, this government has the responsibility to do something about this situation. It must continue to find markets to guarantee the sale of the farmers' produce. The farmer relies on the Canadian government to do this, yet at the present time I feel they have been let down. This may be a more complicated matter than it appears to be on the surface, but a mistake has been made. I