

Canadian Wheat Board

I do not think the minister denies that he went out west and told the farmers union, in Edmonton, I think it was: Do not grow more wheat, because we cannot sell what you are already producing. This Russian sale makes that statement sound somewhat ridiculous. I have contended all along as a representative from western Canada that whoever is responsible for selling wheat, whether it be the grain board or the Department of Agriculture or the Department of Trade and Commerce, is doing so as an agency of the government itself. Selling wheat is a government responsibility, and if it cannot sell it the western people must be told so.

Now I shall read from what is, I presume, a Liberal paper. This seems to reflect the attitude of a number of eastern people. Commenting in the *Kingston Whig-Standard* on Mr. Young's article, the writer says:

But, quite apart from politics, this business of wheat in the west is obviously something concerning which Mr. Young has let the farmers out there talk him into a daze. The western wheat farmer has no interest in what kind of a market he has for his wheat; all he cares about is selling it at as high a price as possible. It is, he thinks, his God given right and destiny to grow and sell wheat—this is the heart of the western mythology. . . . They don't want to work any harder than that and they betray no hesitation in saying so.

That is absolutely ridiculous. If this is the opinion that the government or the Liberal party has of western wheat producers, it will be a long, long time before they will have sufficient members from the prairies to appoint a minister of agriculture from that region. They were quite fortunate last time.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): I don't know that they were.

Mr. McIntosh: I also want to refer to another eastern paper which I think has an actual grasp of what the situation is in the west. This is the story that I am quite sure western Canada wants to put across to eastern Canada, because it is true, and if anybody wants to take the time to delve into the subject he will find it is so. I wish to refer to the *Sudbury Daily Standard* of June 20, 1963. The article is headed, "Farmers Fear New Policies Will Damage Export Markets", and it reads in part as follows:

Revelation that the Pearson government in Ottawa hired "outside" experts to assist in the preparation of the budget should not be surprising. Informed Canadians know that there is sometimes little relation between Liberal election propaganda and performance.

The most recent election campaign was no exception. This was the party of "experts" in the matter of economics; this was the party with the men of ideas "to get the economy rolling". But once in office the Liberals hired experts "outside" of government and the civil service.

Nor is this delusion on Liberal know-how confined to matters of finance. One section of the farm press that came out strongly in support of the

[Mr. McIntosh.]

Liberal party and urged a change in government is now having second thoughts, and nearly all published letters written by farmers disagree with the Liberal policies. It is now a matter of record that the farm vote in Canada was almost solidly in support of the Diefenbaker government.

It may be remembered that Liberal government dairy policies were made known only 36 hours before the May 1 deadline and decisions on policy changes made only some 50 hours after agriculture minister Harry Hays and agriculture minister-to-be Rene Tremblay took their oaths of office.

The farm press has been taking a long, hard look at these policies which indicate greater dairy surpluses, lower exports, higher prices to consumers and reduced income for dairy farmers. It is feared there will be serious export loss in British and European markets. The Liberals, who favour more trade with the United States, cannot look for markets for farm products in that country. It is already plagued with stockpiled surpluses.

It will also be remembered that in its first days of office the Liberal government returned the Canadian wheat board to the Department of Trade and Commerce.

This is significant? It could be. The Diefenbaker government put the board under the Department of Agriculture and export wheat sales soared. By mid-May, under the Liberals, export wheat sales were already down by 30 million bushels from the same time last year. There seems to be little likelihood that the Liberal government will be able to match the Diefenbaker government's record in wheat exports.

That would have been correct had it not been for the one sale to Russia. I will prove later with figures that under the Liberal administration, whether they were the ones who sold wheat or whether the wheat board under their direction sold wheat, Canada was gradually losing all her foreign markets for wheat. The article goes on to say:

Canadian wheat farmers also have long memories. They can recall a previous Liberal administration that lost Canadian wheat sales by trying to collect another five cents a bushel from prospective European customers. It was a Liberal administration that tried to unload Canadian wheat at \$1.50 a bushel when the world market price was \$3. a bushel.

I think that is sufficient information from the press to convey to the house that the issue is a very confusing one, and the government by its action of putting the wheat board back under the Department of Trade and Commerce has confused the issue more. When the wheat board was under the Department of Trade and Commerce at the time that the present minister was deputy minister the policies were also confused.

I have mentioned before that I was very critical of our party in this regard. I refer to page 7693 of *Hansard* for August 6, 1960, at which time I said:

As the government has complete control of the marketing of wheat on the prairies, then it is the responsibility of the government to see that markets are obtained or tell the producers they are unable to do the job.