

[Text]

We are in a grain surplus area; consequently all our trading in grain is done with our own customers. We have not really bought any grain from other than our own customers during the past year because our customers have enough grain to supply us. So, if we are involved in fertilizer, feed, medication, whatever it is, we just trade with our own customers at the posted price. We have never paid below the price that is posted on the board, and at times we have paid a higher price because we might be short of oats and we will telephone a farmer to bring in a load of oats and we will give him a nickel more because he brought it in on a moment's notice.

**Mr. McKinley:** Thank you very much. I have one more question, Mr. Chairman. I can see that you do not operate on a quota basis, as the Wheat Board does, and being a businessman I cannot say that I blame you.

You have stated that many farmers are mixing their grain because they can buy grain from a neighbouring farmer cheaper than they can buy it from the feed mills, and in order to make use of this grain they are being forced to buy their own mixing equipment, which is an added cost for the farmer and it is probably hard on him when the western farmer is in the cash position that he is. Could this not be rectified? Is this necessary? What is the reason for this? Are the custom feed mill operators charging too much for this service or are they charging too much for the grain? Why does the farmer have to buy his own equipment when that equipment is set up in your mills?

**Mr. Newman:** Mr. Mair will answer that question.

**Mr. Mair:** I would like to reply in this way, sir. They are not being forced to buy this mixing equipment, they are wilfully buying it. They are going out and borrowing money at 9 or 10 per cent interest simply because they feel they can do it on the farm and they can buy cheaper from their neighbour than they can through the Wheat Board or from the local feed mill.

If I may comment momentarily on the other question you asked, are we making a preference with respect to who we deal with, going back three years we had a great shortage of grain at that time and a number of our customers supplied us with grain so that we could carry on business, rather than taking it to the elevator and selling them quota, which they could have done. As they were able to help us at that time we are naturally going to try to give them a little preference at this time.

[Interpretation]

Nous sommes dans une région où il y a un surplus de céréales. Notre commerce se fait donc avec nos propres clients. Si l'agriculteur désire de l'engrais, du fourrage ou quoi que ce soit, nous faisons l'échange en respectant le prix affiché. Nous avons toujours versé le prix affiché. Nous avons parfois donné plus quand nous demandions à un agriculteur de nous livrer de l'avoine sans pré-avis.

**M. McKinley:** Merci beaucoup. J'aurais une autre question, monsieur le président. Je vois qu'il n'est pas question de contingent comme c'est le cas pour la Commission canadienne du blé; étant homme d'affaires, je ne peux vous blâmer.

Vous dites que de nombreux cultivateurs mélangent eux-mêmes leurs céréales, car ils peuvent les acheter d'un voisin à un prix moins élevé que celui qu'exige la minoterie de provendes. Ils doivent alors acheter leur propre équipement ce qui aggrave leur situation financière. Est-ce qu'on ne pourrait pas corriger cette situation? Est-ce que les minoteries demandent trop cher pour ce service ou pour les céréales? Pourquoi le cultivateur doit-il acheter son propre équipement?

**M. Newman:** M. Mair va vous répondre.

**M. Mair:** Ils ne sont pas obligés de le faire, ils le font de leur propre gré. Ils empruntent à 9 ou 10 p. 100 d'intérêt parce qu'ils pensent pouvoir le faire dans leur propre ferme et qu'ils auront les céréales à un prix moindre que celui de la Commission ou d'une fabrique locale.

Je vais maintenant répondre à l'autre question. Il y a trois ans, il y a eu une grande pénurie de blé. Nos clients nous ont fourni des céréales, pour que nous puissions rester en affaires. S'ils ont pu nous aider à ce moment-là, il est sûr que maintenant nous allons leur accorder une préférence.