

*Wheat Export Prices*

Thompson) mentioned it. He took the reference right out of my mouth. Read about the seven lean years and the seven fat years. That is the cycle in which we find ourselves. Joseph's solution was to store the wheat in the fat years and sell it in the lean years, just in case hon. gentlemen opposite do not know about it. Nothing has changed. The situation now is the same in its essentials as was the biblical situation 4,000 years ago. The only difference now is that the government is asking the farmer to bear the storage costs, the handling costs and all the other costs resulting from the government's stupidity and mismanagement.

Let us look at how this came about. When this government came into power wheat markets were flourishing and taxes were 30 per cent below what they are now. Our national income was up while prices were down. I am referring to 1963. The Liberals came to power on a phony issue which no one ever bothers to discuss now, namely the Bomarc issue. It is as dead as last year's wheat sales. They proceeded by mismanagement and neglect to destroy the huge wheat markets we had built up from 1961 on. Last summer they sat with their hands folded for months during the interim period after the International Wheat Agreement ran out. They trotted over to Europe and let the Canadian farmers be sold down the river, while prices dropped. They were afraid to stand up to the United States when that country, along with France, shot holes in the International Grains Arrangement which has now been totally repudiated by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, who has no more understanding of wheat than he has of trade or industry. I am sorry that the minister is not here because I hate to say things like this about the fine gentleman.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** This is the truth.

**Mr. Paproski:** The government refused to step in during the month-long grain handlers strike last year. They refused to step in while shipping piled up in Vancouver harbour because box cars were not available to transport wheat. They did nothing while our markets went down the drain. Now, the Prime Minister goes to western Canada and puts on a performance that can only be described in waltz time, perhaps "Voices of Spring", or "Tales from the Vienna Woods". Here we have the Prime Minister of a government which lost the Russian wheat contract and the Chinese wheat contract and sat

helplessly while our customers went elsewhere because of uncertain delivery. Then, the Prime Minister has the gall to say to the most efficient producers in the world: You are not economical. Western Canada should rise in its wrath and give its answers to the government; I am confident it will do so. Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, the wheat issue is not a local nor a regional issue, as the hon. member for Calgary South (Mr. Mahoney) knows; it is a national issue of first importance.

**Mr. Boulanger:** To you it is a political issue.

**Mr. Paproski:** This nation cannot afford to lose the massive injection of income we have received through wheat sales. The economy will suffer a heavy blow because of the loss of half a billion dollars in international wheat sales, or even half that amount, which is the expectation for the coming year.

The impact of the government's failure to sell our wheat will show up almost immediately in the economy of western and eastern Canada. Not only is the western farmer a major producer; he is also a major consumer. The effect will be seen in reduced sales of new automobiles manufactured in eastern Canada, reduced sales of farm machinery also manufactured in eastern Canada, reduced sales of appliances, clothing and a host of other consumer goods on which the economy of the country is balanced. An economy already on the razor's edge and suffering from overtaxation, overpricing, over inventories and unjustifiable interest rates cannot easily sustain the shock of a major blow at this time.

The tragedy is that in the face of a national calamity the Prime Minister has no solution beyond the negative, bureaucratic formula of overproduction and uneconomic operation. Surely, we have gone beyond the stage in our economic capabilities to react to a situation such as this by burning production or plowing it under. The Prime Minister's text books must be 35 years out of date.

It is up to the government to produce a solution that will get the farmer off the hook, move the wheat and restore confidence in the Canadian economy. If they cannot do that, they should resign and we will do it for them.

The farmers' union proposed the solution that the government take over our surplus wheat. What is wrong with that? The government's answer is to let the farmer take it over. Why should the farmer, the producer, who has fulfilled his part of the contract by