

*International Wheat Agreement*

to the British make-up. The majority of people are not told about the colossal wastage of British foreign investment that took place in world war I, and the fact that those foreign investments were never made up between world war I and world war II, and could not be made up. They are not given an accurate picture of the dreadful losses Great Britain suffered again in world war II in the matter of foreign investments.

Those various investments were absolutely necessary in order to enable the British to balance their trade. How long is it going to take members in this house to have that fact pounded into their heads so they will be able to talk in terms of reality instead of in terms of nonsense. We have heard nonsensical expressions used in this debate, and we have heard statements made reflecting on Britain that it was a shame should have been made in the Canadian House of Commons where people ought to be a little more informed on these matters. So I say let us not blame Britain if there is difficulty in connection with the wheat agreement.

As the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Low) and various others have pointed out, the British would have to pay from \$7,500,000 to \$10 million more if they paid 5 cents a bushel extra, depending on how much wheat they bought and upon whether or not they purchased at the ceiling price. Of course that is something we cannot know anything about now.

The question we need to ask ourselves is, what can be done about the matter? Personally I think the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) has done admirably. I do not think he could have done any better. I think the wheat board has done admirably. In order to change the situation we have to have a deep, fundamental change in our way of attacking this problem, of which the Canadian government has given no indication of being ready to support. Until such changes are made, to blame the Minister of Trade and Commerce, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner), the wheat board or anybody else is just utterly nonsensical and unbecoming to a chamber in which men should be mature in their thinking and in their knowledge.

Is there anything that can be done? As the hon. member for Peace River and other hon. members have pointed out, especially the hon. member for Melfort (Mr. Wright), there are changes which have taken place as the result of government policy, and nothing else, which have brought about a disequilibrium in this country which will require tremendous adjustments to reconcile. As the hon. member for Peace River truly said, we

cannot expect Britain to pay the shot for our foolish mismanagement in Canada.

As I have mentioned before in this house, one example of such mismanagement is the fact that this government here in Ottawa permitted an advance of \$5 per ton in the price of steel in 1946. What that meant to the Canadian farmer in terms of cost of machinery, railway freight rates, cost of wages and cost of many other things has never been computed. I venture to say that if the cost of that silly move, which was unnecessary, was completely determined all across the board the people of Canada would stand staggered at the far-reaching and tremendous effects of that one move.

As I have argued before, if the steel companies had had to have \$5 more a ton we could have subsidized them and been twenty times better off as a nation. I doubt very much that they did need it, but they said they did. As soon as they got that advance the wage earners in those industries said that they wanted half. I do not blame them at all. But away went the cost of everything, including wages, in Canada. Now please do not blame Britain for a stupid move like that on the part of the Canadian government. That is what we are doing when we complain against her for refusing to pay us the high prices we now need.

The price that we are asking for wheat, considering our costs in western Canada, is not exorbitant. We are entitled to have all of it because we are suffering as the result of that unreasonable move on the part of the government, along with a good many others. I am still discussing the question of what we ought to do about it. First of all let us decide what to try to do about it. Let us not be silly. Let us see if we can find some way out of this difficulty.

According to the *Alberta Wheat Pool Budget* of October 31, 1952, the United States exports of wheat up to the middle of October, 1952, totalled 83.5 million bushels, 42 million bushels less than in the same period last year. This article says that the United States bonused that wheat to the extent of \$183 million. That is, they paid part of that price at which the wheat was sold. Is there any conceivable reason why Canada should not do something like that? Why should not Canada also subsidize?

I do not wish to suggest that the taxpayers of the two central provinces and the rest of Canada should be victimized through being taxed for the money with which to pay this subsidy. If we in this house were governed by thinking such as prevailed in the first parliament of Canada in 1868 we would be able to see that this government could create