

*CNR and Air Canada*

there are not enough boxcars, then buy some more or rent them from the United States.

**Mr. Benjamin:** You would think this is the first year we have had snow.

**Mr. Forrestall:** My colleague from Prince Edward Island spoke about the lack of refrigerator cars for moving potatoes from the island. What in God's name can be the rational excuse for not being able to move our goods to market? We give these companies millions and millions of dollars year in and year out, yet our farmers cannot sell their wheat because they cannot move it. This is lunacy, and I cannot understand it. I can only suspect that the same situation obtains when the minister stands up and says in such a convincing way, "That is a great question; glad you raised that. We were talking about that just this morning and I am going to have something done about it before tomorrow. If the hon. member will give me a couple of days we will straighten it out". Then, you never hear of it again. It is the same with boxcars for moving wheat and refrigerator cars for moving potatoes, the same thing with fish.

**Mr. Benjamin:** Every year for four years.

**Mr. Forrestall:** Yes, but I am not worried so much about the past as what it augurs for the future. We have had talk about this for months. Are there not enough boxcars in Canada to move grain? Why not? If the CNR has not got the initiative to get them let's sell it to some enterprise that can build the boxcars.

**Mr. Benjamin:** No, no, don't do that; it is worse in the CPR.

**Mr. Forrestall:** I am not sure which is the worst.

Mr. Speaker, this is what I have been trying to illustrate on the subject of national ports—the minister is emphatic about something and everybody talks a lot but nothing happens. Of course, these problems pose difficulties; but please do not tell us that they will be resolved, that they are being worked on and that they will be squared away the day after tomorrow when, actually, you do not have the foggiest idea as to where in the world you are going. Do not mislead people. If there are not enough boxcars, do something about it. Do not simply admit the shortage and do nothing, which is what is now happening. Western Canadians and people living in the Atlantic region deserve somewhat better treatment from their national transport system than the sort of treatment they have been getting in recent years. There is a need to resolve our problems in the east as well as in the west. I think most problems could be resolved if people spent more time working them out instead of talking about them.

• (1640)

**Mr. Rod Thomson (Battleford-Kindersley):** Mr. Speaker, I notice that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Buchanan) is covering the debate on behalf of the minister.

**Mr. Benjamin:** That's a lot of help.

[Mr. Forrestall.]

**Mr. Thomson:** I think, perhaps, that it is. I have found the parliamentary secretary a hard working fellow and conscientious. Moreover, he does his homework. If he is to solve the problems that have been raised in this debate, he will have to work at night, too. I want to talk about some problems. I hope he listens to suggestions that I and others might make and, hopefully, deals with some of these matters.

In my hand I hold a collection of newspaper articles which deal with more export trade for Canada. One column in the *Globe and Mail* is headed, "More Pacific trade predicted by Pepin". That is okay. I hope that this is not merely a pep talk by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin). Logically, we can expect more Pacific trade, and I hope it will come about. I hold here a news release from the Canada Department of Agriculture. In it the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) refers to record export sales of agricultural products. I hope that the statements in the release are not merely political statements. I come from an area which exports agricultural produce, and we want that trade to continue.

I now pick up a report from the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool which refers to the new trade agreement involving wheat sales to Russia. The first paragraph says that Canadian grain producers are assured of good wheat deliveries; the author assumes that we can get the grain to market, of course. Then, I pick up a copy of a speech which was delivered by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Humboldt (Mr. Lang), otherwise known as the minister in charge of the Wheat Board. He spoke in Thunder Bay about transport matters. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, he certainly makes a good speech. He knows all the details and talks of what should be done with new and modern methods of transport and so on. But you know, Mr. Speaker, that is not enough. Making studies or studies of studies is not enough. There comes a time when you must decide to act on the basis of those studies. That is where I criticize the present government. We have seen more white papers and studies during the last four years than in any previous four-year period in Canada's history. Some of those studies have been wonderful. However, when it comes to doing something constructive to meet some of the problems uncovered by those studies, the record of this government is not so good. I hope the parliamentary secretary is listening.

I want to say something about shipping grain to the west coast, or about trade and the west coast, if you will. The bulk of my remarks will be on that theme. In that connection I have in my hand an article that I wish to quote from extensively. It comes from British Columbia and is entitled, "Is Vancouver's port strangling?" It is written by John Clarke and reads in part:

The end of the U.S. West Coast dock strike will only partially relieve pressure on the port of Vancouver. The port's basic problems are made in Canada or, more precisely in the words of Vancouver officials, in Ottawa.

For weeks upward of 20 ships have been lying idle in English Bay unable to get to a berth to load cargo. Already prairie grain farmers have lost \$3-million this winter, the cost of penalties for late deliveries from West Coast ports.

Exports through the port this year are expected to be 43 million tons, nearly 22 per cent higher than in 1971. Shipments last year totalled 35.3 million, which was 30 per cent higher than in 1970.