

Supply—External Affairs

minister to explain this, because I am quite convinced that if that had happened we could not have opened up our trade with Cuba, and I point out that there has been no change with respect to our trade with Cuba since this government took office.

Further, there has been no change with respect to our trade in grain with communist countries. It was interesting to hear the hon. member for Medicine Hat press the government this afternoon to tell the committee where it stands on this question of recognition. Here, too, there have been some changes. It has not been a case of osmosis altogether, but changes have taken place. I should like to draw attention to what was said in the course of a speech made by the leader of the Social Credit group in this house on November 23, 1962, as reported in *Hansard* at page 1951. That hon. member, who is now out of the country on a special mission for the government—I shall say nothing about this now, though I may have some comments to make with regard to it later—was asked by the present Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources to make the position of his group clear as far as trade in grain with red China and the other communist countries was concerned. Mr. Chairman, I have continually heard the leader of that party deny he was ever against selling grain to Russia. Well, it took me a lot of research, but I finally came up with this exchange which took place back in November, 1962:

Mr. Laing: Would the hon. member make an unequivocal statement that the group he heads does not favour the sale of foodstuffs to red China and other communist countries?

Mr. Thompson: The question the hon. member has asked must seemingly give some concern as far as the answer is concerned.

Of course it would, because 95 per cent of the hon. member's riding benefited from the sales of wheat to China and Russia and it would cause a great deal of concern if the leader of the Social Credit party was against these sales.

The Chairman: Unfortunately I must interrupt the hon. member to point out that his time has expired. If there were unanimous consent—

Mr. Woolliams: I have just a few more words to say.

The Chairman: Is there unanimous consent for the hon. member to continue?

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Maybe the hon. gentleman intends to take only a minute or two.

Mr. Woolliams: Well, the minister certainly shows us the kind of courtesy we respect on this side of the house. I shall not get into an argument with members on the back benches behind him because their actions speak for themselves.

I should like to read the reply given by the hon. member for Red Deer.

As long as there are hungry people on the free side of this struggle that I am talking about, who need our wheat and cannot get it, we are against the sale of wheat to communist China or any other such country.

In brief, I do not see how they can come along now and say they are in favour of recognizing China, or in favour of any of these ideas. I say this because they were opposed to opening up the avenues of trade. If we do not open up the avenues of trade with countries such as Russia and China, how can we work out these solutions which will lead to peace and security in the world?

I had a few other words to say with reference to another matter, but I intend to resume my seat now, because I appreciate the courtesy extended to me. The hon. gentleman is one of the most courteous ministers on the front bench and, as I say I appreciate courtesy when it is shown.

Mr. Prittie: About 15 years ago I spent about two years in a brief, unsuccessful career in the department. During that time I learned to sympathize with a particular group—the people in the department called F.S.O.-1s. This is the bottom person on the diplomatic totem pole—foreign service officer, grade one.

When I think back to those years and think what a struggle it was—we were paid \$2,500 a year at that time—I was a veteran, married, with a child, and I was paying \$95 a month rent in Ottawa, and found it difficult to get by. It was a thoroughly miserable time, from a financial point of view. So I have had a continuing interest in salaries paid to staff members of the department, and I am wondering now whether the government is offering enough to get the right sort of person for this job, and a broad enough choice, and in the second place whether or not those chosen are having too much of a financial struggle when they take up their duties and begin to learn the difficult job of serving the country in the department.

I wonder, too, whether the salaries are sufficient to attract the numbers and types of