

Wheat Export Prices

in the publicizing and marketing of our grains. They left the impression that the Wheat Board is in a Fuller brush type of operation. That is not so. Very few individuals in today's world are actually buying wheat, and I am sure that they are properly visited and attended by the Wheat Board. The leader of the N.D.P. left the impression that the Canadian government had not done its homework and that the Wheat Board was not publicizing Canadian wheat properly. That is not so. The Wheat Board has numbers of missions coming in and going out. As a matter of fact I ought to be in my office at this moment receiving a delegation from Tanzania and Uganda.

The Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce has a number of missions, both incoming and outgoing, that publicize Canadian goods, and wheat in particular. The department has offices in some 70 odd countries. We have trade commissioners who devote an extensive amount of time looking for sales and trying to help the Canadian Wheat Board. On numerous occasions the Wheat Board has said to me how grateful it is for the help these trade commissioners are providing.

As I look around the world I ask myself, where is there a better system for the marketing of wheat? I do not know of one. Yet the opposition inveighs against our system of wheat marketing. If our sales are not as great as we wish, that is because circumstances are not what they were. A number of countries that were importers in the past have now become self-sufficient; and a number of those that were self-sufficient have now become exporters, Roumania, Bulgaria, and Kenya are examples in question.

The wheat glut was mentioned. The leader of the N.D.P. hoped that the present world situation will not continue to exist for ever. I was about to say, "Amen", but that might not be very Christian. I might only mention that the cycles he referred to are very real and that sooner or later there should be a greater need for Canadian wheat. In those circumstances we will meet the objectives the Prime Minister set for Canadian exports.

That is about all I had to say, Mr. Speaker. I shall be glad to answer questions. Of course the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) will also take part in this debate.

Mr. Korchinski: Will the minister permit a question, Mr. Speaker? I wonder if the minister would indicate whether at the recent meeting in Washington the members of the European Economic Community, France in

particular, agreed not to go to the Far East because of excessive freight rates and close competition? Did they not at the same time leave themselves this opening: that they could still compete at a lower level? Was that not why the United States dropped its price, and why Canada had to follow suit?

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, at the Washington meeting the E.E.C. was represented by an official and not by a politician. Consequently the official made a report to the E.E.C. After receiving that report the E.E.C. made an offer to the United States, the terms of which in part are those to which my hon. friend has referred, but probably not for the reason he gave. What the E.E.C. will do in view of the United States action of Friday afternoon I do not know. We shall find out in the coming hours.

• (4:30 p.m.)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Dumont (Frontenac): Mr. Speaker, we are dealing here today with what might be called the "deadly incoming tide of wheat". The problem is acute, as I have had the opportunity of noting on a visit out West with the committee on agriculture.

Indeed, the situation is serious, for the income of the farmer no longer suffices for him to pay for his equipment or enlarge his land, which, as the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) said, may be worth \$100,000 or \$125,000.

Last spring, I met farmers in Saskatchewan and Alberta who had to move their equipment outside in order to store the wheat they had produced in huge quantities in the last few years.

Now, if a farmer cannot sell all his wheat, even though his farm may be worth \$100,000 or \$125,000, he still needs his daily bread. Surely, under those circumstances, he should be guaranteed on honest sustenance.

A bill allowing farmers to get interest free loans would enable them to survive but it would not solve the problem, which is one of finding outlets and, in our present economic system, where can those outlets be found?

Half of mankind suffers from malnutrition. Farmers have to let wheat rot in the fields or in barns, as I said a while ago, leaving the economic system at the mercy of the chartered banks, with the co-operation of a government that will not base money upon production which if monetized, could be distributed to the underfed part of humanity.

[Mr. Pepin.]