

has been held in this chamber, and I am sure there will be opportunities for everybody to answer everybody else, but I do not think the person who has the floor should be answered by everybody else when he has the floor.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I hope the hon. member will wait until I am through to find out whether I am going to quote figures. After all that has been done in the past three or four years by the government and the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board, with the buoyancy and optimism which exist across the prairies today, it is strange that the Conservative Party should launch this bitter attack on a westerner who has done more for the grains industry of the Prairies than any other single individual in the country's history.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Even the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton), who delights in the levels of grain sales when he was minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board, has to concede, that is, if he has any appreciation for the truth, that grain sales in the present minister's poorest year were higher than they were in the best year under the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain.

The highest sales achieved by the Wheat Board in any one year under the Conservative government was in 1957-58 when grain sales amounted to 453 million bushels. In the present minister's poorest year, and I stress in his poorest sales year, 1969-70, the Canadian Wheat Board sold 488.8 million bushels. So, in fact, more grain was sold in the poorest year of 1969-70 than in the best Conservative year of 1957-58. The Conservatives still call the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain their supersalesman. Under the Conservatives from 1957 to 1963, five crop years, total grain exports amounted to approximately 2 billion bushels.

From 1969 to 1973, four crop years, grain exports are approaching 3 billion bushels—3 billion in four years compared with the Conservatives' 2 billion in five years. And yet hon. members opposite actively promote the myth that they were super grain salesmen. If their man was a super salesman, our man in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board on the basis of the facts must be considered the greatest supersalesman ever. By comparison, our man stands out like Secretariat in a pasture of burros! Let hon. members opposite laugh that one off.

● (1730)

As I have said, we on the Prairies have come a tremendous distance in the past three or four years. The transformation from those dark and dismal days of 1968 to these bright and buoyant days of 1973 is no accident. This government and the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board undertook in 1969 the first genuine, fundamental and thorough examination of the entire Prairies grain situation. From that start in 1969 until the present a host of imaginative and bold steps have been taken to cure the fundamental and basic ills of the industry. The results of these new policies are evident across the Prairies today. They will stand for years to come as part and parcel of the new foundation being built for a healthy and booming grains industry.

Wheat Sales

Hon. members opposite refer to Lift and the stabilization proposal. I will deal with these. Let me remind hon. members of the market development fund which this government established in 1969 and into which we have put \$10 million a year to develop markets for our grains, to open up new markets and to develop new uses for our grain products. Let me remind them of the block system of shipping. Without the block system currently in effect and put in place by this government, we simply could not be achieving these current record export levels. We could not be moving to export these tremendous amounts of grain if that block system had not been introduced. Every farm organization in western Canada has hailed the block system as a major step forward in handling even greater amounts of grain for export in years to come.

Let me mention the purchase of 2,000 hopper cars. Again, the grain handling and transportation system could purely and simply never handle the unprecedented volumes of grain now moving to export market position unless this government had stepped in and bought for \$42 million these 2,000 hopper cars to move grain from the Prairies.

An hon. Member: The cars were bought at election time.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Let me refer to initial prices and quotas by March 1 of each year. Prior to 1971 initial prices and quotas were announced around August 1 of each year, at the beginning of each crop year. By this time, however, the crops were nearing harvest. Farmers for years had requested better and earlier information as to possible quotas and initial prices. Two years ago the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board announced that this government would provide farmers with guaranteed initial prices and guaranteed quotas on or before March 1 each year, that is, before seeding. There is not a farmer in western Canada who has not appreciated this. They wanted information in advance of seeding, not at harvest time, as to initial prices and quotas: this government is giving it to them.

Let me remind hon. members opposite of the new quota system. Two years ago a new quota system was implemented following recommendations by a committee established by the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board. That committee consisted of Mr. Boden, vice-president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, Mr. W. G. Winslow, general manager of United Grain Growers Limited, and Dr. J. L. Leibfriend of the Canadian Wheat Board. The new quota system has given our prairie grain farmers a far better system and much more freedom in their planting and marketing decisions.

Let us again talk about the two-price wheat system. Mr. Speaker, for years, including the Diefenbaker years, farmers and farm organizations were pressing the federal government to establish a two-price system under which wheat for domestic purposes was at that time pegged at a higher price than the export price. For years, including the Diefenbaker years, these representations fell on deaf ears. But this is not the case with the present government and the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board. In 1971 we announced the two-price system under which domestic grain now brings \$3 a bushel. This year \$57