

*Supply—Public Works*

today I would have suggested the construction of permanent drying facilities at the inland terminals. Grain could be transported to them for drying and rerouted to country elevators for storage. Although this would not be the best way to handle grain it would be better than putting damp grain into country elevators where, as a result of weather conditions, it may become a partial or total loss.

One of the recurring problems has been the shortage of box cars at the harbour and inland terminals. On occasion this has been due to the reluctance of the Canadian Pacific Railway to provide box cars at terminals when it was more advantageous for the railway to use them elsewhere. I know this is not the responsibility of the minister, but I think he will agree that if he provides additional drying facilities at the inland terminals and damp grain cannot be delivered there because of a shortage of box cars, the whole process will break down.

On a number of occasions we have appointed a transportation commissioner and given him control over box car allocation. This is something that should be considered in the present situation. Such a commissioner could allocate box cars to areas from which it is necessary to move damp grain.

We have spent years and much effort developing markets throughout the world for our grain. We are not going to be able to sell damp grain on the export market. No one in eastern Canada will be interested in buying feed grain if the present situation is not rectified.

I have visited the terminal elevators on the west coast and at the Lakehead elevator complex and have been surprised that the construction we have undertaken is not meeting the ordinary needs of today. Recently I read a pamphlet issued by the Japan trade centre dealing with a complete change in the type of shipping that will be used to handle many types of cargoes. Many new ships are being built to carry container cargoes. The containers measure 8 feet by 8 feet by 20 feet and 700 or 800 of them are carried on one ship. It is possible that we shall soon be exploring this method of moving grain from our inland terminals and, if so, the facilities at those terminals will have to be changed accordingly.

All of us remember the efforts made by the hon. member for Skeena to have port and grain handling facilities expanded at Prince Rupert. His efforts were opposed both by the hon. member for Calgary Centre and the hon.

member for Niagara Falls when they occupied the position of minister of agriculture. However, I know that the Minister of Public Works, who comes from Canada's western maritime province, is familiar with the development taking place at Prince Rupert and knows the role played by the hon. member for Skeena in that development. The changes made at Prince Rupert will result in that port being able to handle new methods of cargo transportation.

If the government would direct the Department of Public Works to undertake new construction at inland terminals I believe that department has the necessary planning and construction know-how, although these things have not always been evident as some of my friends will argue in the case of the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. I am sure the minister will also agree that if his department rather than Mr. Bennett had had some say in the development of the facilities to be provided in the Roberts Bank project things would have been handled in a much more advantageous manner and many of the problems developing in the area might have been avoided. It is my opinion the minister has the facility to foresee some of the construction needs in his own area. Had he done so he might have avoided the problems which are now developing in western Canada, particularly those in respect of the lamentable situation which gave cause for an hon. member to stand up this afternoon and say we are not only drying a very limited amount of grain in terminal elevators but in inland elevators as well.

• (4:40 p.m.)

The members of the committee made a study of this situation and recommended that construction be undertaken to modernize the facilities for drying grain at a number of points on the prairies. As far as I know this has not been followed up by any concrete action. I presume that the drying facilities at the inland elevators have not been improved and that in fact there has been no substantial gain.

Those are the few remarks I wanted to make in this regard. I feel that the Department of Public Works has a responsibility in this field and that this house has the responsibility to pursue every avenue to see that a long term or permanent solution is found for some of these problems which occur year after year to plague various areas. One of these problems relates to inland terminals and is the result of the fact that we have not