

exports while total world exports declined by about 15 per cent. Because of our indecisive response to the new challenges our wheat exports declined by almost 40 per cent.

In closing I should like to say this, Mr. Speaker. In the short term, government policy has probably averted a cash shortage which could have been ruinous to a viable industry. An assessment of marketing difficulties and opportunities must now be rigorously and frankly undertaken. This economic area must harmonize supply and demand for two reasons. First, the kind of assistance the farmer is now receiving in terms of cash advances can only be repaid by sufficient acreage quotas in the future, otherwise western agriculture will become hideously indebted to the federal treasury; secondly, the wheat economy cannot, and historically should not become a burden to the financial capacity of the government. If we are to make any progress in meeting the hurtful and chronic poverty of agriculture in the regionally depressed areas of eastern Canada and the maritimes, western agriculture must again become a contributing cornerstone of our economy.

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, every so often in this debate in which the House is engaged I find myself thinking of it as a state of the nation debate. In other words, in the traditions of this parliament we come back from the far corners of our big country and give to those members of the House and the government who take time to listen some report of the state of the nation, as it were, in our particular corner of it. In the last hour or so we have heard something about the problem of marketing wheat from the member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Southam) and we have heard about the problem of marketing fresh and salt codfish in Newfoundland from the Minister of Transport. But I suppose some of the matters on which I shall speak this afternoon will not have come to the particular attention of either of those hon. members.

I found it quite interesting that in the spirit of this debate the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson) spoke to us as a member from the Province of Newfoundland rather than in his capacity as the Minister of Transport. I think his speech could give us some food for thought. He gave us a picture of the true tradition of debate in reply to the Speech from the Throne, where one can be reasonably expansive about one's own viewpoint, at the same time recognizing that other members have something to contribute to the progress of public life in this country.

The Address—Mr. Barnett

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, as I listened to him I wished that his colleague the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson), who appears to be in a rather panicky and near hysterical state these days, had been in the House to absorb something of the spirit and the approach taken by the Minister of Transport. When I listened to the Minister of Finance on Monday I began to feel that the state of the nation must be much worse, at least from his point of view, than I had found it during the time I spent in my own constituency. I wonder if the minister has read his remarks in *Hansard*. He seemed to be almost hysterical and in a trigger-happy mood. I should like to draw some of his remarks to the attention of the House. He was referring to capital investment policies, priorities, and proposals of the NDP for controls in our economy in terms which reminded me, a member from British Columbia, of the tone of voice adopted by the Premier of British Columbia in the provincial election of not too long ago when, on being panicky about his prospects of returning to power, the Premier pulled out all the stops and pushed all the political panic-buttons. When referring to the NDP proposals the Minister of Finance said, as reported on page 147 of *Hansard*:

• (4:40 p.m.)

—the inevitable consequences are arbitrary judgments, gross inequities, rationing, and for the first time in Canada since the war, a black market. Worst of all, the state will have to move into every factory, every store, every office, every trade union and every household. Perhaps this is the kind of communist control that the NDP wants for our society—

In his election campaign the Premier of British Columbia talked of the heavy hand of the Marxist socialist state, but I did not expect that the Minister of Finance, when discussing the seriousness of the state of the nation and what can be done to overcome inflation, would display such shattered nerves. Considering some of the remarks made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) during the question period, about the imposition of certain controls if certain voluntary measures do not work out, I am inclined to think that the Minister of Finance is more worried about his colleagues in cabinet. Perhaps by his remarks he was lashing out at those colleagues indirectly, since he could not lash out directly. I am afraid that the minister has been speaking about imagined comments emanating from our party, because remarks he has attributed to members of this group bear no resemblance to statements made by our spokesmen inside or outside this chamber.