

*Grain Payments*

Community that a meeting be held at ministerial level to review the Canadian program and consider complementary action which might be taken by others designed to compound its benefits internationally. I am confident these governments will agree to participate in an early meeting and I am hopeful this will mark a turning point in our efforts to rationalize the world grain situation.

In the meantime, every effort is being made to increase export sales. Increased food aid shipments and more attractive credit facilities have assisted the Canadian Wheat Board in attaining sales that will reach 375 million bushels this year, greater than any year save one in the history of the board from 1943 to the year of the first major purchase by the U.S.S.R. in 1963.

With the successful completion of this major reduction program, market forecasts indicate that Canada will be able to return to a level of production in the area of 20 million acres. Additional measures will be required in 1971 to assure that production does not exceed acceptable levels.

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, one thought was expressed by the minister with which I am in complete agreement, that this is a situation which requires government leadership. After listening to the minister we are still waiting for that leadership. The opposition has been pressing for months to get the government to make commitments as to its long-range intention with regard to agricultural problems, including the extremely serious situation in western Canada. As usual, we have been fobbed off by the minister and his colleague the Minister of Agriculture who hide behind the officially accepted phrase that the government uses to cover up inaction and incompetence and inefficiency—"The government has the matter under consideration and will announce its policy in due course."

The day of "due course" has arrived, Mr. Speaker. The minister has laboured and produced a limited and shabby program for the farmers and the agricultural community in western Canada, all the people whose future looks so bleak. In light of the information we have, what he has produced is entirely inadequate. The fact is that the agricultural industry in general and certainly in the west has fallen into disastrous conditions, a disastrous situation. This is something which is not temporary but shows all signs of becoming a permanent blight brought on to a large extent, we recognize, by world conditions but

certainly aggravated by the fact that this government is, and for some years has been bankrupt of ideas and intelligence in this regard. In our view and in the view of the agricultural community there is a sense of sterility and defeatism, and this is apparent in the statement made by the minister today.

Just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, in a special report to the Economic Council of Canada by Mr. S. C. Hudson, former director of economics in the federal Department of Agriculture, made a statement that some of the main reasons for the difficulties, particularly in western Canada agriculture, are the lack of uniformity in the protein content of Canadian wheat shipments, a lack of flexibility in pricing and insufficient market development work. There are other criticisms but these alone I give to the House today because of the limited time at my disposal.

The growing feeling of frustration, anger and alienation in the west will not be eased but will in fact be compounded by the minister's statement. As practical people we in the west do not expect miracles and understand that problems of the nature of those which afflict us will require long-range treatment. Certainly not since 1963 have we expected or received too much from this government, but we did feel entitled at least to some understanding and to some sympathetic consideration and proof of determined effort to get at the root of the problems.

I suppose we should not have expected or hoped for too much understanding from a government headed by a Prime Minister who publicly indicates his indifference to the problems of selling wheat, but we did hope for something better from the western representatives on the government side, particularly those in the cabinet. Not only have they been ineffective in pleading the cause of the west but in my humble opinion they have ended up as collaborators in proposing completely unacceptable programs. I do not think that any other countries in the world are taking this defeatist attitude.

What about the problems of the manpower surplus which is being created? What about crash manpower programs? What about the regional incentive programs designed to meet situations of this kind? What about surpluses which may result from changing the emphasis from wheat to other crops? What about the surplus wheat which will result from this land which is being summerfallowed? These are all questions which need to be answered and have not been answered.