

Grain

Many of them will not get any payments out of the 1951 crop, and many will not have their crops threshed by that time. The time should be extended to November 15, because to stop payments on October 1 will create hardship on many farmers.

Mr. Howe: I do not think it is fair to be discussing the bill when it is not before us.

Mr. Argue: I was glad to hear the minister say that if the \$20 million or the \$5 million guarantee was not sufficient, the situation would be corrected during the session next spring. I wonder if the government still has under consideration the matter of paying farm storage. If the wheat board paid farm storage, a slight increase in the initial price would enable these farmers to pay the interest on their loans.

Mr. Howe: I do not mind saying a word on that. To me farm storage is the most fallacious nonsense in the world for improving the lot of the farmer. Who is it that pays farm storage? It is the farmer. He pays it to himself. My hon. friend is practically suggesting that when delivery of grain is made, say in March, instead of getting \$1.20, which probably would be due on No. 1 northern wheat, the farmer would get \$1.24. All right, that is 4 cents he is ahead there. But when he gets his final payment he is going to find that 4 cents is deducted. All he gets is 4 cents a little bit earlier.

If we changed the interim payment and made it 24 cents instead of 20 cents the result would be practically the same. After all, in a normal season every farmer has the right to market the same amount of wheat as every other farmer under the quota system. Therefore every farmer has about the same proportion of his grain to carry over a period. Some farmers do so deliberately, because they want to be sure they will have grain until they know how their crops are coming along in the next season.

A great deal of grain is marketed in June and July, as my hon. friend knows. One of the difficulties faced by a handling pool is that you get so much late-marketed grain. The payment of storage encourages the holding of grain on the farm, and with a short crop that would be most embarrassing indeed. The purpose of the wheat board is to sell grain just as fast as they can find markets and it is most important that the grain be in the elevators where the wheat board has it under its control.

When you set up a system of farm storage it is not just for one year, it usually becomes a permanent situation. It could be a situation that would react against the farmer. After all, the wheat board is only the agent

of the farmer and if the wheat board gets in trouble, the farmer for whom the wheat board is agent is also in trouble. I travelled across the prairies and talked to farm leaders everywhere, and it was not until I reached Saskatoon that I got any indication of any interest whatever in farm storage. I think any thoughtful representative of the farmers would know that the holding out of the payment of farm storage to farmers, knowing that the farmers would be paying the storage to themselves, is misleading the farmers as to their best interests.

Mr. Argue: I take issue with the minister in his argument on farm storage. I do not think it is fallacious nonsense, and I do not think that anyone who proposes farm storage is misleading the farmers. The minister knows that at one elevator point there may be lots of box cars, there may be ample room, there may be no quota and the farmers may be able to haul out a large part of their grain. At some other point the situation may be entirely different. I know farmers in my own constituency who were unable to deliver a bushel of last year's grain until February or March. I do not think farm storage is fallacious at all; I think it is only justice that the farmer who cannot market his grain—that is the situation now for a great many farmers—should get some compensation for being forced to store that grain on the farm. After all, the elevator companies get it and it is the farmers' money that pays the elevator companies. I see no reason why the farmer who cannot sell his grain should not get farm storage.

I think the minister's suggestion that because it is done in any one year it will become a permanent policy, that the government will have to keep on doing it, is fallacious nonsense, if the minister will pardon my using that term, because the government can change its policy in connection with wheat very quickly, as has happened in the past. The wheat board paid it around 1942 and they did not continue that policy.

We have had two bumper crops. Let us assume that those two bumper crops are marketed and that next fall the terminals are empty and there is lots of room in the country elevators in western Canada. Then, as the minister said, we may have a short crop. I think the minister has a much better argument against farm storage in a situation like that. As to the situation this year, it was the government's policy, as the minister has said to us in the house, to move grain early in the year from Manitoba and Alberta, where it was available, to seaboard and to the lakehead. Those farmers were able to sell their grain, but farmers in Saskatchewan