

Grain

facing a staggering loss from the mismanagement that has been going on since this government, and especially the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, has tried to run the affairs of the Wheat Board.

At this time I would like to congratulate the hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski) who has brought this important matter to a head and, as is evident from the announcement made by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson), forced the government to take steps that have already been suggested by a number of hon. members. There has been an announcement tonight that all available amounts of No. 2 northern are to be moved as quickly as possible.

Mr. Olson: That action was initiated a long time ago.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): It still took the debate to get it moving. Before the minister made his announcement he knew very well that members of the house were aware of it since the early afternoon.

An hon. Member: Nonsense.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): This is only a further indication that hon. members on the government side have holes in their heads. The hon. member for Lethbridge (Mr. Gundlock) brought to the government's attention the fact that although there are very severe winter conditions in western Canada this year they are conditions which the railways have been used to and should have been able to overcome. On other occasions far more wheat was moved with far fewer box cars available. This is an indication of mismanagement in this field.

Someone has reminded me that the railways then used steam engines. I am happy to take up this point because my constituents were very sore a few years ago when the C.N.R. converted from coal to oil. This is an indication that the railways may well begin to think of coal again. I only hope that some day we shall see a reversion to steam, which would give the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce a suitable form of locomotion to surmount the difficulties caused by cold weather and carry the grain over the mountains.

I noticed a number of contradictions between statements made by various members on the government side. Not long after the Minister of Trade and Commerce had spoken the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Douglas)

[Mr. MacInnis.]

took part in the debate, expressing an entirely opposite point of view with regard to the appointment of a transportation commissioner. This is what he advocated, but the minister was afraid to go along with the idea.

I take exception to certain of the remarks made by the Minister of Agriculture because I consider them to be a reflection on the decision of the Chair to allow this debate on an important national issue. The Speaker agreed to allow this debate; yet the Minister of Agriculture said it was destroying markets. In my opinion this was a reflection on the Chair.

Mr. Olson: On a point of order, at no time in my speech did I make any reflection on the Speaker in any way, shape or form.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): The Speaker ruled that a debate on this important subject could be carried on to deal with a question of national importance on an emergency basis. When the minister gets up and says that opposition members are destroying Canadian markets he is reflecting on the Chair.

An hon. Member: Not at all.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) was in attendance for a short time. Hon. members over there talked about weather conditions and blamed the situation at Vancouver on the weather. It was like hearing a weather report from every minister. The Prime Minister remarked at that time: "Bring on the sun". This expresses the interest and concern the Prime Minister has shown for the western farmer.

An hon. Member: Sounds like Smallwood.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): If you want to believe some of them, there are prominent Liberals who would have us think they can control the weather. Perhaps we shall have an opportunity of hearing where that report from British Columbia was, whether or not the figures were obtained.

When questions about this situation were put to the minister last fall the hon. gentleman summoned up his best smile, shrugged his shoulders, gave a wave of the arm and said: "We can always pray". This was the attitude of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

Tonight the same minister asked the house with the same wave of the arms and the same smile—no, I must say the smile had devel-