

who is sponsoring the bill. One of the reasons there has not been over the course of many years an increasing utilization of the port of Churchill by the export trade, particularly for the export of wheat, is, so we are told, because of difficulty in obtaining marine insurance for the entire length of the shipping season. To put it another way, one of the reasons the shipping season at Churchill is not longer than it has been in past years is not the physical or climatic conditions but rather the fact that a period of 20 to 25 days has consistently been chopped off the potential shipping season at Churchill because of lack of marine insurance.

It would strike me as strange if we did not make use of the powers contained in this bill to underwrite insurance so as to extend the shipping season at Churchill. It would strike me as strange if we failed to exercise the powers available in this bill, which seeks to stimulate exports by all manner of firms engaged in different sectors of the economy, to extend the shipping season at Churchill and thus reduce the price of western wheat to the importers. If this were the case I would not blame the western farmers and those interested in extending the shipping season at Churchill for being dissatisfied, if not embittered.

The fact of the matter is that the savings that would be realized by producers of western wheat and/or by the importers of that product would be approximately 10 to 12 cents a bushel. Everybody knows this. We have all been looking for ways and means of realizing this kind of saving by reducing transportation costs but nothing ever happens. The answer that comes back is that it is a matter of marine insurance. We are told that the shipping firms that operate the bottoms cannot get insurance, and there the matter is left. The buck is passed and somebody else is supposed to deal with the problem. As a result no progress is made. It would seem to me that this new corporation would be in a position to help resolve this problem, and I will be very disappointed with this administration if it does not give the new corporation some guidance and leadership in this respect.

Having listened with interest to the introductory speech of the minister may I say I agree with him and support his sentiments that we must do what we can to increase and stimulate Canadian exports. That is not saying very much. When opportunity presents itself to take concrete action to achieve this end, I hope the minister will not hesitate in

Export Development Corporation
providing leadership to every sector of the economy.

I should also like to ask the minister whether he does not feel that the government could help to stimulate export trade, and in particular help our wheat producers, by taking steps to appoint more trade commissioners to eastern Europe. Is it not the fact that the number of trade commissioners in eastern Europe is zero? Export trade promotion for Canada in countries like Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria is done from Vienna, and those who from time to time try to promote exports to Poland work out of Copenhagen. And so the story goes. Something tangible could be done here to stimulate exports. Since 1965, I believe, we have not increased the number of personnel engaged on trade promotion in Europe, certainly in eastern Europe; yet we expect somehow to do better when it comes to selling goods in that part of the world.

The minister may have a good deal of faith in what Bill C-183 will accomplish. We hope that the proposed Export Development Corporation will somehow stimulate exports. Perhaps one way it will do so is through its system of guarantees of investments, which will help businessmen overcome some of their fears. I have no complaint about this part of the bill. But I will complain if this crown corporation fails to assist in extending the shipping season at Churchill; in this regard I think it could have a direct influence. I will also complain if the government, through the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, fails to increase the number of trade commissioners throughout eastern Europe. I think this is a legitimate complaint inasmuch as the government will be missing an opportunity to do something tangible to try to promote the sale of Canadian products in that part of the world.

Very often it seems to me that this administration is guilty of engaging in blown-up publicity and propaganda campaigns, in setting up agencies and ad hoc committees, all of which look impressive enough on paper, while all the time failing to take advantage of or follow up on opportunities for taking concrete action. I have a long story to tell in this regard in connection with area development, but I realize, Mr. Speaker, that you would call me to order if I tried to develop this point at this time.