

sell to the consumer at the same price. The consumer cannot pay any more. Besides the miller and the foreign trade. It would not cost the Canadian consumer any the miller has still kept on the inside of the foreign margin. It will not increase as much as the foreign market because there has got to be some margin between the miller and the foreign trade. It would not cost the Canadian consumer any more. I made this assertion—I think I am absolutely within the limits of safety—that if we raise a normal crop of wheat next year and this Wheat Board secures 25,000,000 more for the crop than would be secured under the open market, the consumer would not pay one cent more for his flour. Is that clear?

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: That is very interesting. Would you tell us how you have arrived at that figure? You have used the figure, \$25,000,000 several times; would you just tell us what basis you have for arriving at that figure so that we may have an intelligent grasp of its significance.

Mr. WOODS: You cannot absolutely arrive at it by any detailed analysis; it can only be by an estimate. In the sale of the 1919 crop—I forget just the number of bushels involved—but it was estimated by men who were in the best position to give intelligent information of any men I know that the saving to the farmer in the sale of that crop, on a very conservative basis, was \$50,000,000. From what information I had in regard to that matter, I was satisfied, even before I heard that estimate of the expert's, that that was a very low estimate.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: You cannot guess or give us any general principles on which that estimate is based?

Mr. WOODS: Some of the details on which the estimate is based I would not care to give. You cannot arrive at that absolutely. But take the rise and fall of the market during the past year. Here is the value of wheat one time, and here is the value at another time—up now and down now, farmers selling, catch as catch can; and it is reasonable to suppose that if the flow had been controlled and the price intelligently negotiated, you could have kept the market somewhere near stable, not at the low point, but near the high point. If you will follow the market closely, and take the rises and falls, and assume—which I think is perfectly fair—that intelligent control of the flow and negotiation would have kept it somewhere near the level of the peaks, I think you will fully justify the \$25,000,000.

Mr. McKELVIE: Is it contemplated under this Board to have any control or regulation of the distribution of railways and steamships, or, if not, would there not be a danger of congestion if you set out to sell large quantities?

Mr. WOODS: The old board did.

Mr. McKELVIE: Is it contemplated by the new board?

Mr. WOODS: We assume so. We are asking for the reinstatement of the Wheat Board, and I presume that that involves practically the same terms.

Mr. ANDERSON: I would like to ask if Mr. Woods thinks that if the board had been in existence in 1921 it would have relieved to any great extent the financial condition of the western farmers.

Mr. WOODS: I think "relieve the condition" is too strong a term. I think it would have saved a lot out of the wreckage, but it would not have relieved the condition. Every million dollars helps just that much, and I think it would have saved the western farmers quite a good many million dollars but not enough to give actual relief.

Mr. ANDERSON: Was it not the failure of the crops that caused the present financial condition of the western farmers? Am I right in that?

Mr. WOODS: No, you are not. Of course, conditions in the west were such that some have had three or four successive crop failures. The conditions are appalling. Those people are being taken care of, and actual starvation is prevented by contribu-

[Mr. H. W. Woods.]