

Wheat Export Prices

advance available to producers, namely, an increase from \$3,000 to \$6,000. We have also taken action to enable producers to obtain interest free emergency cash advances for the purpose of drying wheat amounting to \$600 per producer.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the minister, but his time has expired.

[*English*]

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, to help offset the effects of reduced delivery opportunities, the government has directed that prairie grain farmers will be eligible for full interest free cash advances in the new crop year even though outstanding advances have not been fully repaid as at the end of this crop year. Last year these advances amounted to something like \$156 million. As at the end of this year between \$60 million and \$65 million remains unpaid. Added to this \$60 million to \$65 million there are next year's cash advance payments, so one can conservatively estimate that about \$250 million will be put into circulation in this way on which the government will pay interest. This amount represents quite a substantial contribution by the government of Canada to the economy of western Canada.

The leader of the New Democratic party also asked me about credit facilities. The wheat sale a couple of weeks ago to Peru was based on the new credit facilities the government is now offering, namely \$6 million this year and \$6 million next year. This arrangement facilitates sales of wheat in a number of developing countries where the Canadian government feels it should assist the marketing efforts of the board. Again, this is an important contribution. Again, this is something for which the Wheat Board is grateful to the government.

• (4:20 p.m.)

Very often questions are heard here: "Is the minister doing everything he can for the Wheat Board?" I do not know what more I could do to help the Wheat Board. If you consult the commissioners I am sure that is the report you will get

I will not go into the provisions of the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act but, Mr. Speaker, action taken under this legislation this year represents a further contribution of

some \$60 million from the Canadian government to the wheat economy. That is not peanuts. I am merely trying to put the record straight and demonstrate that something is being done. One would not believe it on listening today to the speeches of the leader of the New Democratic Party and the Leader of the Opposition.

I wish to draw attention to the increased foreign aid that has benefited western farmers. For instance, when the right hon. gentleman for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) allowed acreage payments to western farmers, in 1958, 1960, and 1962, the total of those payments, represented \$120 million. In that period, of four years running from 1958, to 1962, the amount of foreign aid given by the Canadian government represented \$66 million. If you take the last four years you will see that the present government has provided wheat and flour aid worth \$260 million to developing countries of the world. I repeat from 1964 to 1969 Canada has given \$260 million in wheat aid. So I suggest that the leader of the N.D.P. was not well informed when he said that tremendous amounts of money could be put into these programs. A tremendous amount of money has gone into them, and that is why I was a bit sarcastic when I said he should know better than make the statements he was making.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Will the minister permit a question? Will he specify how much money was paid out in each of the crop years? Could he tell us how much has gone into foreign aid with respect to wheat and flour.

Mr. Pepin: I have the figures.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Has the minister the figures for the last three crop years? If so, do they include the figures for the present year?

Mr. Pepin: In part. Let us not be too political, Mr. Speaker, let us begin with the period 1963-64. The figure is \$4.4 million. For 1964-65 it is \$20 million; for 1965-66, \$30 million; for 1966-67, \$89 million; for 1967-68, \$63 million and for 1968-69, \$56 million. One of the main reasons our aid has been declining is that there is simply less need for us to give food to the world. It is well known that Pakistan and India are, at the moment, almost self-sufficient in wheat. Because of that our aid to that area has not been so necessary.

I listened to opposition spokesmen saying that this government is not doing well enough