

*Supply—Public Works*

damp, tough grain which will have to be dried this winter.

The picture is plain to see. Certainly we must improve the dredging of our major ports. We must improve the buildings, the basic installations necessary for the handling of Canadian products. It is necessary to streamline port facilities. It is not good enough to put up modern buildings here and there while the railroad leading to them is tied up by city traffic for half a day before the cars can get in there. We remember the situation two years ago when box cars were piled up from Vancouver almost to the Rockies because of the difficulty of moving cars to the terminals. The fact is that the activities of the Department of Public Works, the Department of Transport and the Board of Grain Commissioners which handles the terminal elevators, must all be dovetailed together. In other words, one department has to know what the other is doing; they have to work together if we are to keep abreast of the demand nationally and internationally for Canadian products.

I can only say once again this fall that we in Canada have failed to keep abreast of the need for improved harbour facilities, particularly to deal with damp grain, a problem which is causing severe hardship to many prairie farmers because in consequence they have not been able to market their grain. They face the situation that if the grain is not marketed before early spring there will be a tremendous amount of spoilage and wastage. For this reason I urge the Department of Public Works to get together with the other departments concerned and not only give Canadian Vickers a subsidy of \$180,000 every year but facilitate the marketing of Canadian goods and streamline the handling of Canadian products even if this includes the drying and cleaning of Canadian grain which has played such a major part in increasing Canada's exports during the past number of years.

**Mr. Peters:** Mr. Chairman, I, too, went on that trip two years ago when members of the agricultural committee learned a great deal about the agricultural problems of various areas of this country. I was impressed this afternoon by the motion which the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain put forward with regard to western agriculture and I was surprised that members of the government did not take the opportunity to announce the changes which I am sure are necessary. When a motion of that kind is moved I am often impressed not so much by

[Mr. Horner.]

the arguments as to the urgency of debate as by the indications that if a debate were allowed members of the house would be in a position to offer practical suggestions to solve the problems which had led to the demand for a debate. If the house is not capable of suggesting any solution to those problems then in my view there is really not much point in having a debate at all. But if a genuine crisis develops I am of the opinion that some consideration should be paid to the readiness of hon. members to offer their solutions.

I realize the minister is wondering what this has to do with the estimates of the Department of Public Works. I am coming to that. The department is responsible, among other things, for providing the facilities needed by the grain trade in western Canada. I was surprised that one very vociferous group, the wheat board, under the able leadership of its chairman, was able to provide itself with new facilities which were probably long overdue. I was equally surprised when an even more influential group, the Board of Grain Commissioners, failed to obtain new facilities. The minister may say he will not build them but I suggest he should be interested in extending the influence of the Department of Public Works into the construction of all public developments in Canada.

• (4:30 p.m.)

When I visited the Moose Jaw terminal, one of the large inland terminals discussed today by a number of hon. members when they spoke about the drying of grain, I was surprised to discover it was built 50 or 60 years ago and very little change has been made in it since. In fact the method of dumping grain there has hardly changed at all from the time wagons were used right through to the use of rail cars. This is another matter that must be considered. Most of the box cars still use the side dumping method, archaic beyond imagination in the context of a commodity which is one of the largest revenue producers for a great portion of our nation.

Damp grain is a serious problem at present, and if the government considers the construction of drying facilities this would likely come under the responsibility of the Minister of Public Works. The fact that there are no additional drying facilities at Moose Jaw indicates that the government has failed to meet a need it should have foreseen. Over the years farmers have been plagued with cyclical problems of drought and damp grain, and had the motion been allowed for a debate