

Grain

government what to do. I know some people say he did but I don't believe that.

The function of the minister is to support the organizations for which he is responsible to parliament, to bring the different parties together when need be, to do everything to help these parties in the accomplishment of their tasks and this, Mr. Speaker, has been done in these grain difficulties by the members of the cabinet.

The hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Gleave) says that we should discuss, I think I quote correctly, the efficiency of the grain handling system in Canada. I am old enough to know that when things go well people go on their knees to praise the transportation system in Canada. Now that the weather has not been as kind as we all would like it to be, now that some difficulties have arisen I think this is a poor moment to suggest that there is something fundamentally wrong with the transportation system. I remember very well the praises accorded to the transportation system when things went well.

An hon. Member: When was that?

Mr. Pepin: Anyway, I can say honestly that the ministers of the government have given the proper wheat marketing and transportation authorities the fullest support we could. We have given our complete co-operation and I do not think anybody will say differently. But of course—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I am afraid the minister's time has expired unless there is unanimous agreement of the house for him to continue.

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

Mr. Pepin: I will conclude by saying—

Mr. Bernard Dumont (Frontenac): I object, Mr. Speaker, because I was not allowed to continue my remarks earlier.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It is a matter of consent. There is the consent of the house to allow the minister to continue, whereas that was not available earlier.

[Translation]

Mr. Dumont: As unanimous consent is necessary, I object.

An hon. Member: You have nothing to say.

Mr. Dumont: I was not allowed to continue my remarks a short while ago. It is now my turn to object. I also asked for unanimous consent, and it was not given.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Dauphin.

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak to this motion, and as its seconder, I would like to express my concern with the problem. In my opinion, the present situation of our wheat exports at the port of Vancouver is an indication of the chaos, lack of direction and failure of the government to one of the main segments of our economy in western Canada, a segment that is vital to have an agricultural policy that will benefit the well being of our nation.

On January 21 the President of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, in an address to the annual joint conference of the Dominion Grain Association and U.S. Lake Carriers Association, stated that Canada's position in the world wheat trade is precarious and unlikely will ever again be as good as it has been in recent years. I would hope he is in error but at least this is an informed opinion.

We now witness the prospect of sales that we cannot fulfil due to the mismanagement of our export mechanism in the transfer of grain from the farms to the ships, at a time when the world wheat crop has exceeded 10 billion bushels for three consecutive years. This has resulted in a large surplus for the exporting nations of the world and intense rivalry to have this grain disappear into the markets of the world.

In an article in the *Canadian Press* of November 6, 1968, by Allan Sackman, the question is posed "Can the world do without our grain"? The statement of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in Winnipeg that the prairie farmer should sell his own grain, when it is well known that it is impossible for the farmer to sell his own grain, shows a lack of appreciation of the problems facing the agricultural producer.

Recently the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) announced the licensing of a variety of Mexican wheat designed to fill an area of wheat marketing for feed grains. This will cause further congestion in ports such as Vancouver in transferring this grain to the markets of the world. The increased number of varieties of wheat and other grains causes