

Wheat and Coarse Grains

be able to deliver considerably more wheat this autumn than was delivered during the same period last year. If that is possible it would not seem necessary to make new provisions for the storage of wheat on the farms. However, the situation will be watched, and if there are sections of the country where adequate deliveries cannot be made, the government will take steps to see that the farmer does not suffer unduly from that cause.

Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Lake Centre): There is one other question arising out of the statement made by the minister. What is the number of bushels for which storage space is available in the elevators of western Canada for the present wheat crop, at the present time? In order to meet the situation, which is not quite as cheerful as the minister seems to think it is, has any consideration been given to the suggestion that a payment be made to the farmers for storage of wheat on their farms, a payment equal to that being paid today to the elevator companies?

Mr. Howe: As I remember the capacity of all the country elevators, it is about 280 million bushels. It is customary to reduce that by 10 per cent to provide for handling space, so I presume the country elevator space is about 250 million bushels, and I would judge that there is something in the neighbourhood of 50 million bushels in store in the country at the present time. These are figures from memory. I think they are roughly representative. Therefore there is about 200 million bushels of open storage in the country. I think that there is at least another 100 million bushels of storage available in eastern Canada in the Georgian bay and St. Lawrence elevators and in the maritimes. The movement of wheat has been expedited in every way, but the fact is we have not had wheat sufficient to take advantage of the cars and the boats available up to the present time. The lack of grain has enabled other commodities to be moved in the interval, so that grain will have a fairly clear field from now on.

My hon. friend thinks I am overly optimistic. I may say that this morning I had a meeting with the chairman of the wheat board and with the transport controller, and the statement I have made is a considered statement after obtaining the advice of these gentlemen.

My hon. friend asks whether it is the intention to pay storage to farmers for wheat held on the farms. The wheat board act makes the necessary provision but it also makes provision that that storage will be paid, as all other storage is, from the gross revenues of the pool. It seems to me that if

[Mr. Howe.]

the quota system is operated fairly, as in past years—and I think it will be—to pay farmers for storage on the farms would simply be to ask the farmer to pay storage to himself.

Mr. Diefenbaker: It would not cost any more than paying the elevator companies.

Mr. Howe: It would not cost any more, but it would be an additional payment from the farmer to himself, as it would come out of the pool receipts, which are the property of the farmer. Payment of farm storage would not speed up the payment for the wheat in any way. It would simply mean that the producer's initial payment would be increased by perhaps a cent a bushel a month, and that his final payment would be reduced accordingly. That proposal has been carefully examined, and it is not the present intention of the government to adopt that policy.

Mr. Cruickshank: May I ask another question? Has any consideration been given to providing the Pacific coast with frozen wheat of poor quality for cheap feed?

Mr. Howe: The Pacific coast, like all other parts of Canada, is being provided with grain at the going market price. We have no cheap wheat; we have some frozen wheat. I assure my hon. friend that he can buy frozen wheat, as can any other part of Canada.

Mr. Fair: I should like to ask the minister a question. Has any further consideration been given by the government to increasing the price of wheat supplied to Canadian millers for consumption in Canada above the present international wheat agreement price to class II wheat prices?

Mr. Howe: The answer is no.

ORDERS IN COUNCIL**INQUIRY AS TO WITHHOLDING
FROM PUBLICATION**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Can the Prime Minister tell us whether there are any orders in council passed under the Emergency Powers Act which are being kept secret or withheld from publication? If so, can the Prime Minister make an explanation about the matter?

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member will look at the summary of orders in council that I tabled the other day he will see that there is one referred to as having been exempted from publication for security reasons.

Mr. Knowles: Is there only one?