

Wheat Export Prices

Mr. Speaker: I have to interrupt the hon. member to remind him and the house that the hon. member's time has expired. He may continue only if he has the unanimous consent of the house.

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I was under the impression that 40 minutes was the maximum for debate under Standing Order 26. Am I wrong.

Mr. Speaker: I am subject to correction. My understanding is that the rule has been cleared up. Standing Order 26(14) states:

No member shall speak longer than twenty minutes during debate on any such motion.

I gather the hon. member qualifies under 26(14).

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

Mr. Trudeau: Make your suggestion. You can do it in 30 seconds.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) wants my suggestion.

Mr. Trudeau: In 30 seconds.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Let me start with the Prime Minister's suggestion. He is the one in charge of the show. He is the boss. He sits in the seat of power. Let me read what the Prime Minister said to the people of western Canada in the same speech of June 2, 1968. He said:

Variations in world cereal supply-demand give rise to year to year fluctuations in Canadian grain sales and farm income. These fluctuations create difficulties for grain farmers in making forward operational plans. To meet this problem the government will immediately involve all interested parties in the development of a self-sustaining program of income protection for western cereal producers.

He went on to say:

Resolution of this problem will be sought in sufficient time to bring in legislation to permit implementation of a program early in 1969 should it be required.

There can be no doubt about it being required. When I asked the Prime Minister on orders of the day about this promise of an income protection program he implied that he was talking about cash advances on farm stored grain. I want to point out that the very next paragraph in his speech dealt with that. When he talked about an income protection plan, he did not include the cash advances as

being part of the income protection plan. He went on to say:

To meet farmers' needs for operating funds at harvest time, advance payments will be increased, as soon as possible, to provide for the doubling, to \$6,000, of the amount available to individual farmers as interest-free loans on farm stored grain. At the same time the burden of repayment will be eased by reducing the rate of repayment.

The Prime Minister indicated over a year ago that early in 1969 the government would be introducing an income protection program for the western farmer. We have been trying for at least eight months to find out what that program is.

The government wants suggestions. Ministers have received suggestions from this side of the house again and again. Even more important, they have had them from the farm organizations and from the wheat pools. It has been suggested that in order to meet the immediate situation the government might pay an acreage bonus of \$2 an acre up to a maximum of 1,000 acres. We in this party have suggested that the government consider a more speedy way of getting money out to the farmers by making a deficiency payment of 20 cents a bushel on the wheat which was delivered in the 1967-68 crop year, up to a maximum of 5,000 bushels. That would just about make up to the farmers the drop in the price which took place in that crop year.

The other suggestion, which I am sure has been made to the Prime Minister and his colleagues again and again, is that the government has a responsibility to see that the floor price of \$1.95½ a bushel, basis Fort William, which was set under the International Grains Arrangement, be the guaranteed price to the wheat producer. If the Canadian Wheat Board finds it necessary to embark upon a price war in the sale of wheat, then surely the price of waging that war ought not to be borne exclusively by the people who produce the wheat.

If the government and the Wheat Board decide on a price war in order to stay in a competitive position with those exporting countries that have violated the I.G.A., then surely this battle ought to be waged by the Canadian people as a whole and not just by the farmers of western Canada. Nothing could be more logical and fair than to ask the government to say that as far as the farmers are concerned the Wheat Board will pay them on the basis of \$1.95½ a bushel for their wheat, basis Fort William, and any difference in price which they must accept below that