

*Adjournment Debate*

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member saying that grain is moving in great volume and also that the congestion does not exist at all delivery points but only at certain ones. Certainly it does exist sometimes at as many as 10 per cent of the delivery points in the prairie region at any particular point in time, although not at the same one for necessarily very long.

The fact is, of course, that the producers have delivered by now—or by the reports, before the first half of the crop year is complete over 500 million bushels of grain will be delivered into elevators and we have been exporting at the rate of 20 million bushels, which is higher than last year's level when we set an all-time record. The grain is moving very rapidly indeed.

The Wheat Board did open quotas fairly rapidly in the early part of the year, basically to assure itself that there would be supplies available to continue marketing and that farmers would not hold back on those supplies. There is an eight-bushel wheat quota. The barley quota is up to 20 bushels. This is in order to ensure that the supplies come in. I indicated in the House the other day that there was here a friendly bit of disagreement between myself and the Wheat Board about the speed with which they opened quotas. They were concerned to see the supplies. I was satisfied that those supplies would be forthcoming. I was more concerned to try to avoid congestion. However, congestion has resulted from that and from the fact that there is a tremendous demand for rapeseed and other products which has required those quotas to be opened fairly rapidly.

Grain is not distributed evenly across the prairie region, so as quotas are opened more or less evenly there are particular points where there are difficulties. In addition, of course, there are logistics difficulties. The Wheat Board must call forward wheat from places where it is and see that cars are there to haul it out when that is needed. Sometimes points are neglected where other grains not immediately needed for some shipments are to be found.

The first priority is to get grain to the ports. Vancouver, for instance, has had a lot of grain on hand, rapeseed included. Rapeseed movement is going very well and there should be rapid alleviation of all these situations. At the moment grain is moving very well for this time of the year, but we will only hit the tremendous volume again after Thunder Bay opens and the eastern movement goes into full swing again.

In short, the Wheat Board, which has been facing many problems, has been trying to ensure that grain which is needed at markets gets there. It has been trying to ensure that grain comes in so that they can sell with confidence in the future. This has led to certain congestion. I hope this can be avoided in the future with a slightly more careful opening of quotas. There are individual lines where rail problems occur, where during the wintertime grain is not taken out because so little moves over the line that it is simply not economical to move grain during the heaviest snow months.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

At 10.30 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.

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