

Supply—Agriculture

Certain other advantages would accrue from the additional storage, such as much easier planning for the Canadian wheat board and the ability to handle more than one grain.

The present workhouse is capable of handling a volume of 12 million bushels annually. We feel that the additional one million bushels storage space, which we feel is necessary, would be justified by the savings in overtime and casual payrolls which can be effected over a period of years.

This memorandum was respectfully submitted by Mr. A. H. Wilson, general manager of the Canadian government elevators.

Without going further into all the reasons and arguments, apart from the necessity, for increasing the facilities in Prince Rupert I would merely ask the minister once more whether he has come to any conclusion about this particular grain elevator and the need for expansion. There is no real argument against the expansion of the facilities there. Surely if we are going to proceed year after year working that elevator—and it is one that we own—almost to its full capacity, which is in the neighbourhood of 10 or 11 million bushels, in an inefficient way when the expenditure of perhaps \$1,250,000 or \$1,500,000 at the outside, from what I have been told, would make its operation more efficient, then surely we should go ahead with that expenditure. I cannot say anything else, except to ask the minister please to finish his considerations and tell us what he is going to do. I ask him to be efficient in his own considerations and to expand the most efficient grain elevator in all Canada, namely the elevator at Prince Rupert, and make it even doubly efficient. How about it?

The Chairman: Shall the item carry?

Mr. Howard: No; we have at least one unanswered question, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Hays: Mr. Chairman, with regard to the terminal elevator at Prince Rupert, this elevator is designed to carry 1,250,000 bushels and it handles a turnover of 850,000 bushels. This year it was to be used for No. 5 wheat, but we had a very small amount of No. 5 wheat owing to climatic conditions. The grades were much higher than anyone anticipated, I think. I am quite sympathetic to what the hon. member has said, and I am sorry that I cannot say tonight some of the things I should like to say. But I can say this, that all of the storage facilities which are controlled by the Canadian government in one way or another have been carefully discussed, and I hope in the not too distant future that we will be able to present something to the hon. member which will be satisfactory in so far as the Prince Rupert terminal is concerned.

Mr. Rapp: How about the Tisdale terminal?
[Mr. Howard.]

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman, I certainly appreciate the minister's answer although I am sorry it was not more definite, because this matter has been on the fire for some years now. In fact, two years ago the previous government ordered an inquiry to be made into the matter and that inquiry reported favourably. It is true that the government of that day did not do anything, but this was typical of them and I was hoping we would have a different approach and that the present government would move with speed and alacrity, if for no other reason than by way of contrast to the lack of action which existed before.

I should like to make these comments with respect to what the minister has said. It is true that the elevator's capacity is reputed to be 1,250,000 bushels. However, it is well known that for one reason or another the rated capacity is very seldom reached because the elevator just does not handle that amount of grain. Taking into account the cleaning process, the different grades handled, the fact that some of the bins may not be full and things of that sort, I think that the proper figure for its working capacity is in the neighbourhood, as the minister said I believe, of 850,000 bushels. I gather this is what the board of grain commissioners says is the figure, although the people in Prince Rupert put the figure closer to 900,000. I have also heard the figure of 800,000 used for the working capacity of the elevator; but the fact is that the figure we should look at for the working capacity is between 800,000 and 900,000 bushels. This is the basis on which the elevator operates—not what it will hold if every bin is filled right to the top, a situation that I would say would never develop.

I think I should also point out that with a working capacity of 800,000 to 900,000 bushels the elevator is never in a position of having sufficient storage space to load two ships at the same time. After the elevator has loaded one ship the next ship has to wait until the storage capacity is filled up again and the grain goes through the cleaning process and so on.

I have a letter here from the Minister of Trade and Commerce pointing up the matter of the size of the ships, which is an additional factor in considering the expansion of the facilities there. On October 31 last the Minister of Trade and Commerce wrote me in reply to a letter of mine complaining about the small amount of grain moving through the port. Apart from other information in the letter he had this to say:

In early October a vessel left Prince Rupert with an all-time, record-high volume of grain, viz. 786,000 bushels of No. 5 wheat, destined for