

*International Wheat Agreement*

of those coarse grains. At their agricultural conventions in eastern Canada they have protested, I might say violently, against the use of the grain exchange in the marketing of coarse grains. They believe that it is working to their disadvantage; and in that way it is working to the disadvantage of the western producers, because our greatest market for coarse grains is eastern Canada. It is our most stable market. If the eastern consumer of those coarse grains becomes dissatisfied, if he has to go back, as he did before the war, to the purchase of Argentine or South African corn in preference to our western coarse grains, then we may find ourselves in a worse position with respect to a market for those grains.

Last year, I believe, we exported some 75 million bushels of oats to the United States. If anyone reads the United States papers and interprets them correctly he finds that the indications are that the secretary of agriculture over there is considering stopping the export of oats to the United States. With respect to anything which comes under the price support system, the parity price legislation in the United States, the position will be, if the present act is amended, that the secretary of agriculture, instead of the executive, will have the power to restrict the import of that particular product. If that amendment is made to the present legislation there is no doubt in my mind that the present government in the United States will very definitely limit the imports of any product, the price of which they are supporting under their price support legislation. That would mean we would lose a considerable market for our coarse grains, and we would be dependent almost entirely on our eastern markets and on our exports to Europe and to other countries.

Serious consideration should be given to taking coarse grains off the Winnipeg grain exchange. We should try to work out some agreement with the eastern people who are consuming such a large portion of our coarse grains, so that a price could be established that would be fair for the producers and to the consumers in the east, and we should try to satisfy them by placing sufficient quantities of coarse grains from western Canada in a position in the east where they can secure them as they need them.

During the last two or three years, and particularly in the last two, occasions have arisen when the consumers of coarse grains in eastern Canada have found it very difficult to get immediate supplies. What was in storage here had been used and the shipping situation was such that the stocks could not be replenished. Coarse grains could not

be shipped down the lakes, and no cars were available to bring the grain from the head of the lakes, and there was a shortage of grain when they needed it. Because of that shortage the price has gone up; there has been speculation in coarse grains in the east. The eastern consumers feel that there should be some change, and I believe they are justified in asking that the Winnipeg grain exchange be closed. They, as well as the western producers, believe that when coarse grains were placed under the wheat board the Winnipeg grain exchange should have been closed. That was the understanding they had, and it has not been carried out.

I hope the British government will see fit to sign the present agreement before July 15. I feel that they have had a very fair deal over the last seven or eight years in so far as their purchases of Canadian wheat are concerned, and under the present wheat agreement they will have a fair deal for the next three years. If they do not sign the agreement, then there is nothing that we can do about it other than to exert whatever pressure we can. I hope that the Prime Minister and the other ministers of the cabinet, when they are attending the coronation and when they are having their discussions with the British government, will use every means at their disposal to try to persuade the British government to sign the agreement. One of the best means that they can use is to see that there are more imports of British goods into Canada. There is room for more imports.

I hear people say that the British cannot compete in our markets. Well, I was over in Great Britain last year. I happen to have on a jacket that I purchased there, a homespun Scottish tweed jacket. It cost me \$19 and some cents. If I were to purchase the same jacket in Canada it would cost me \$45 to \$50. I have a pair of shoes which I purchased over there for under \$10. Exactly the same shoes in this country would cost me \$14 or \$15. The British can compete on our markets if given an opportunity to do so. They have not priced themselves out of the Canadian market and the United States market. There are a lot of British goods that could compete in our markets if they were given an opportunity to do so.

**Mr. Smith (Moose Mountain):** What is to stop them?

**Mr. Wright:** There are tariffs and charges. On \$100 worth of clothing which I brought into Canada, and which I declared, I had to pay \$37 or \$38. That consisted of tariff charges and sales tax. I suppose the British manufacturer pays the same tariff that I