

● (9:40 p.m.)

Another reason why France does not care about exporting to the far east is that the transportation would be so costly it would raise that country's export price to the level of the Canadian and the United States export price.

I like the \$1.95 level, I can assure the house. I want it as security for our farmers. But if it works only to the advantage of France and Australia, then we had better take a second look and see whether we cannot find something more advantageous.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): The hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar.

Mr. Basford: We finally have an N.D.P. member in the house.

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): I hear some comments from across the way, Mr. Speaker, and it is nice to know that government members do have something to say. Except for the tractors that were purring up and down the roads of Saskatchewan last week, the silence of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has been deafening.

Mr. Basford: The Prime Minister was listening.

Mr. Gleave: Mr. George Bain of the *Globe and Mail* said that he had made some remarks about kicking a small boy in his posterior, though I do not know whether that is correct or not.

If hon. members across the way will permit me, Mr. Speaker, I should like to make some remarks about the grain situation in Saskatchewan and particularly in my constituency. I listened to the bland remarks of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) as he talked of cash advances. Certainly, he must have been in a different part of western Canada from the region I visited last week. Surely, as he watched the television and saw, as I did 7,500 farmers gathering in Regina, another 8,000 or 10,000 gathering in Saskatoon and the thousands of tractors driving up and down the roads, it must have been brought home to him that something was amiss on the prairies.

Today I was informed that the price of wheat has again declined. The members have repeatedly asked over the last several months for a policy statement from the government with regard to meeting the existing situation. Neither the members nor the farmers have received an answer. In view of the situation

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in Saskatchewan, I would say that the farmers of that province treated the Prime Minister very well.

I asked the Acting Prime Minister last week whether it was the intention of the Prime Minister of Canada, when he visited Saskatchewan, to meet with the National Farmers Union officials. I was told that no such arrangement had been made. If the farmers union had not put those tractors on the road and made a protest, I submit the Prime Minister would have gone to Saskatchewan, entering on the one side and leaving on the other, without sitting down and talking with the representatives of thousands of farmers in the province.

I like to hear talk of participatory democracy but I am not interested in gobbledy-gook. If the term "participatory democracy" is to be used, let it be used in its real sense. In order to have real participatory democracy the government must be prepared to sit down with the individuals in whom the farmers have confidence, those they have elected to head their organizations, organizations to which the farmers pay a certain amount every year as members.

Eventually the Prime Minister did meet these officials, and we heard talk of farmers with assets of \$100,000. This was supposed to be an indication that these farmers were well off, rich. This is the application of the new economics. I did not have the advantage of going to a school of economics to learn about such things, but I have talked to a good many economists and I never thought that one judged a person's income by the amount of capital he was able to invest. But it seems that you do judge the financial position of farmers in Saskatchewan, in Ontario, or for that matter in the maritimes, on the basis of how many tractors they have, the size of the tractors that are standing in the yard, and the acreage that they have.

In all sincerity, I would suggest to the Prime Minister that he use a different yardstick, because this one is going to lead him badly astray. The measure of a grain farmer's income is well known. It is measured by how much grain he sells and by the price at which he sells it. The same is true of a live-stock farmer. One member on the other side of the house stated that the problem facing the farmers would still exist no matter which government was in power. I do not think the problem would be quite so bad as it is under this government. The difference would be that something would be done to solve the