

*Business of Supply*

own knowledge about transportation and partly as a result of consultation with people actually involved in loading and unloading railway cars, terminals and ships. I have also consulted with people actually involved with the operations of elevators and those employed by the railways.

The practice being followed by the minister is backwards. I admit that at the outset the filling of space immediately will incur greater storage charges, most of which will come out of the farmer's pockets. That is not what the farmers are concerned about now. They are concerned about delivering some wheat and getting some cash, and they are prepared to accept some additional storage charges later on.

Let us consider the situation in respect of quotas now as compared with a year ago. The situation a year ago was even worse than normal. I am sure the minister will agree with that statement. A year ago we had delivery problems and problems regarding tough and damp grain. On January 12 a year ago, we had in the neighbourhood of 840 shipping points in the three prairie provinces on two and three bushel quotas. As of the same date this year, there were none on two or three bushel quotas.

I completely support the minister in his enforcement of Wheat Board regulations in respect of delivery, permit books and bootlegging. The tragedy is that as a result of the failure of shipping points in the three prairie provinces to deliver their unit or one bushel quotas, or even the supplementary quota of five bushels from the previous crop year, farmers are forced to go to inordinate lengths to obtain cash. Therefore, they are breaking the Wheat Board regulations. Farmers do not like to do this. The overwhelming majority of farmers support the Wheat Board. They will even accept penalties or fines when they break the rules. The fact is they have not been able to deliver grain and are desperate for cash. They are forced to go to these lengths.

It is time the minister adopted opposite measures in the practice of filling space at the Lakehead terminals. It is normal that at the end of the shipping season the terminals are nearly empty. It is normal to fill up this space in the wintertime. If the farmers could deliver their quotas during the wintertime, this would be of no concern. They would be happy to fill this space. As a result of not being able to deliver their quotas—and this has resulted in their desperate cash situation

and extra effort is required to make space available at the country elevators so farmers can deliver these quotas and receive cash, in spite of the fact extra storage costs will be incurred.

The 60 million to 70 million bushel space in the terminals at the Lakehead is equivalent to a two bushel quota for all shipping points that normally ship to the Lakehead. This would include all the shipping points in Manitoba and half the shipping points in Saskatchewan and would represent about 31 million acres, some 62 million bushels of grain or over \$100 million in farm cash income. Once this grain was delivered to the country elevators half of this amount would be used by the Wheat Board to cover cash advances. This would leave something over \$50 million in the hands of the farmers. Such a program could be carried out within the next five weeks.

I suggest that the space at the Lakehead terminals could and should be filled by the end of February rather than by the middle of April. This would allow farmers at all shipping points in Manitoba, and at over half the shipping points in Saskatchewan, to deliver two bushel quotas some six or seven weeks earlier than would otherwise be the case.

The minister claims it is more efficient to complete the filling of this space close to the opening of the shipping season at the rate of 1,000 cars per day. He suggests it is more efficient to bring this grain in at the end of the loading period. I have talked with grain handlers at terminals and elevators, and they have told me that it is more efficient to unload a thousand cars a day at the beginning of this period when you have space for 60 million or 70 million bushels.

Terminals at the Lakehead, when worked on full capacity, can handle 1,200 or more cars per day. During the wintertime it is true that trains must be short, but it is certainly reasonable to suggest that 1,000 cars per day could be unloaded, and that this space could be filled by the end of February. The number of cars could then be reduced as the terminals were filled. When available space is reduced to 10 million or 20 million bushels there are fewer bins from which to choose for specific grades. There is also less space for drying grain. It stands to reason that when you unload up to 1,000 cars per day at the end of the period, when you have a shortage of space, you will have a backlog of 6,000 to 8,000 cars. It is much easier to unload 1,000 cars per day when you have maximum space at the terminal. I have been assured of this