

Grain

problems. He obtained the assurance that the utmost co-operation would come from all, the railways, the terminal operators and the unions. It worked. There was no strike and deliveries were made on schedule.

Even Jack Pickersgill, the former minister of transport, tried his best to face up to the problem and see that adequate transportation was available. He called a meeting at Winnipeg.

● (8:20 p.m.)

The present minister does nothing but sit in the house, afraid to even venture to speak for himself. He has told us that everything is all right because God is on our side. It is time for the government to wake up. There is no co-ordination, no initiative, no desire to learn and no results. In the meantime we see headlines such as "Grain sales slow over holidays"; "Doesn't the government realize what is happening?"; "farm machinery sales show sharp decrease". This article indicates that sales have decreased in Saskatchewan by 21.8 per cent, in Manitoba by 18 per cent, in Alberta by 17.8 per cent and similar decreases for the other provinces. Does the government not realize how depressed the industry is?

I have another article which indicates that the average earnings of doctors in Canada in 1966 was \$24,993; engineers and architects, \$21,200; lawyers, \$21,000; dentists, \$17,200; accountants, \$13,900; investors, \$7,000 and other professionals, whatever they may be, \$6,800. Even self-employed salesmen earned \$7,600; business proprietors, \$6,000; teachers and professors, \$5,700; federal government employees, \$5,600 and fishermen and farmers about \$5,000. This is the situation, yet the government is quite prepared to lose markets for farm produce. What has happened to the leadership in this country? The Prime Minister goes off to London, treating his visit as a sort of honeymoon. What happened to his promises of 1,300 million bushels of grain sales in the next three years? Mr. McNamara expressed the fear—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I regret very much to interrupt the hon. member but according to the provisions of Standing Order 26 the hon. member's time has now expired.

Mr. Korchinski: May I say in conclusion, if the minister feels the job is too big he should resign.

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I would say at the outset that the [Mr. Korchinski.]

government has a serious responsibility to answer the question which has been put, and to indicate to this house how it proposes to deal with this very serious situation. It should indicate how it proposed to solve the grain marketing problem which affects not only western Canada but this country as a whole. If it will discharge that responsibility, then we should start to move this grain.

We, on this side of the house, have outlined actions to meet the situation which exists. We have done so on a number of occasions. We have pointed out the situation which was building up and stated on at least two occasions what could usefully be done. I suggest that the standing committee should meet with representatives of the Canadian wheat board to examine this matter and to determine what useful position could be taken.

The only answer we have ever been able to receive to our questions from the minister is that the officials of the wheat board would prefer to appear before the standing committee in March. Of course, if this is the minister's answer he is responsible for it and, I suppose, entitled to make such a decision.

On another occasion, I asked the minister whether he would consider doing what has been done before, that is appoint an individual to go to Vancouver to co-ordinate activities there. The minister said he had answered this question five times. I do not recall asking it five times, but apparently he answered it that often. He also said that he could not agree that a single individual should have all these problems dumped on him. I would hope that every crew on the west coast would dump its problems on such an individual. Perhaps if these problems were considered jointly we might find a way out of the impasse we have experienced. This might expedite the movement of grain.

Such a co-ordinator could meet with representatives of stevedoring firms, unions, wheat board officials and members of the board of grain commissioners and, last but not least, he could meet with railroad officials, because I am convinced some of the blockage exists there. He could impress upon them the seriousness of the problem.

Such an individual should be vested with the authority and confidence of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin) and could operate much more effectively than a committee or subcommittee. The government seems to be very strong in favour of committees and subcommittees, dialogue and