

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: Then in marketing in December, January, February, March and I think part of April, before the navigation opens, assuming that the Wheat Board desired to market during these months, they could only do so by forwarding that grain by rail?

Mr. ROBINSON: That is precisely the condition which prevails to-day. There is another point which comes to my mind—

Mr. MILLAR: Is it not the fact that under the Wheat Board as a great many of the farmers are pressed by their creditors, sufficient grain would be required during the early months of the season to supply the ultimate British market during the months of January, February and March until navigation would open? Would it be necessary to take any more grain over the old rail route than at present?

Mr. ROBINSON: None whatever, as far as I can see. I would like to refer to another method that comes to my mind now—

Mr. SUTHERLAND: Before coming to that point. This is a question that affects all the provinces. What object would there be in the farmer holding his wheat if he knew he was going to get the same price immediately it was threshed and particularly if his creditors were pressing him for money? He would naturally want to market his wheat and get the additional payment to settle with his creditors. What is the total average capacity? Is it possible to take care of it in the elevator? As far as Ontario is concerned, I know farmers have been disposing of their wheat during the past few weeks.

Mr. ROBINSON: I think I can answer that question. The farmer does not necessarily want to rush the grain on the market when he knows that by doing so he will depress the price. The average creditor whether a banker, an implement dealer or a storekeeper, if he knows his customer is not likely to lose by holding the grain, he will not bring the same pressure to bear on him to force him to get it out. I have stated that under ordinary circumstances, the farmer without any pressure will be forced to market sufficient grain to meet expense and liabilities in the way of wages, threshing, twine and that sort of thing. The banker who has given accommodation, if he knows his security is so much better by the knowledge that the value of the commodity that the farmer has to sell to meet that liability will not deteriorate and become lower, he will not press for a thing that he knows is safe or more secure under the present market conditions.

Mr. SUTHERLAND: If the argument is advanced that he is disposing of wheat at a loss his financial obligations would force him to clear it out.

Mr. ROBINSON: Possibly.

Mr. BROWN: Did not you advance a reason for the farmer wanting to market his wheat slowly? They can market their wheat much more cheaply in the winter months than in the fall.

Mr. ROBINSON: I think I stated by allowing the farmer to prepare his ground for the following year's crop he would be able to market the grain himself without hiring high priced labour to do it.

Mr. McCONICA: Would you place before the Committee the manner in which our wheat is consumed, that it is not ground by itself but it is used the year round for blending purposes and for that reason it must be marketed slowly. What proportion is used for blending?

Mr. ROBINSON: I would say the bulk of the grain is exported to the Old Country, in fact, almost all of it would be used for blending there. I imagine the grain grown in Ontario and other Eastern provinces would require some western grain for blending purposes, too. I do know that a large percentage, if not all of it is used for blending in the Old Country.

[Mr. James Robinson.]