

be a difficult question for me to answer. All I can say is that in so far as their domestic business is concerned, the volume of their domestic business, they were free to get all they could, just the same as they are now; but in addition to that, in so far as any export business was concerned, my recollection is this—in fact I will state it—that all the mills which so desired, any mill that desired to get a portion of the export business of the Wheat Board, got a portion of it in proportion to its milling capacity with the rest of them. Under that regulation there may have been some mills who said “We don’t want to have anything to do with the export business,” but if they wanted it—

Q. Were all of them invited?—A. Yes, sir. With every order any mill desiring
A. Well, I think it is contained somewhere in this report. I have not those figures capacity on the volume of the order we had in hand.

By Mr. McMaster:

Q. Roughly, Mr. Riddell, what were the total expenses of the Wheat Board?—
A. Well, I think it is contained somewhere in this report. I have not those figures in my mind.

Q. Well, just roughly?—A. We calculated that the cost of the Wheat Board was about half a cent a bushel; that would be some \$600,000, I think, approximately—something like that.

Q. How big a personnel did you have?—A. I would not be able to give you very much idea of that. I think, perhaps, if that is a question of importance that the financial accounts should be called for and placed before the Committee. I have not them clearly in mind, but a detailed statement could easily be got and placed in the hands of the Committee here.

Q. It is a mere question of interest to know how many people it took to run this concern?—A. I think there is some reference made regarding the number of offices that were open and the employees, is there not, in the report?

By Mr. Johnson (Moosejaw):

Q. But, Mr. Riddell, did you not use in that connection the existing grain-handling facilities and companies?—A. Oh, yes.

Q. Which would materially reduce your direct staff?—A. Oh, certainly. The numbers directly engaged by the Wheat Board would not be very large. The expenses such as I have been speaking of would cover not the question of staff so much—we calculated, for instance, that it cost us about a couple of hundred thousand dollars to make these two payments.

Q. That is, in exchange?—A. No; that is the cost of the printing and the labour. Some labour of that character was contracted.

Q. I have not got that clearly?—A. Well, we made two payments.

Q. To meet your initial advance of \$2.25, a subsequent one of 30 cents a bushel?—A. No; we made a subsequent one of 30 cents a bushel. The two I am speaking of are the 30 cents and the 18 cents. That necessitated a tremendous amount of clerical work. I am speaking again at a guess, but I think the business was in the neighbourhood of eight or nine hundred thousand participation certificates issued, and every one of those was registered in our office, and had to be presented for payment, arrangements made to pay and return, because they were not fully liquidated on the first payment and they had to come back again. There is where one main item of our expenses came in.

Q. Mr. Riddell, assuming that a Board of this character were re-established, could the expense in that connection—having the benefit of your past experience available—be considerably reduced by dealing more directly with the banks at the point of delivery of wheat?—A. We did deal with the banks, sir. Most of these certificates came through the banks. I think everything that it was possible to do, was done. The position that we were confronted with was this: at this particular

[Mr. F. W. Riddell.]