

Government Organization

work would they assist the dairy industry? Would they assist the farmer? Would they assist to cut down the \$138 million subsidy to the dairy industry?

I have no doubt we have people in the department able to make these kinds of studies, but if we are going to make these investigations in depth we should know what they reveal. We should know what an investigation of the dairy industry reveals, because you do not divorce the processing industry from the farmer. It is part and parcel of the whole business.

I am concerned about what is proposed and what is going to happen on the grain side of the agricultural industry. From what is said from the other side of the house I understand that the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce jointly with the Department of Agriculture has set up a Grains Council, not by act of Parliament but by letters patent. Will this Grains Council make all the results of its studies public? If it does research, if it investigates aspects of the marketing of grain, of the production of grain, of the transporting and the handling of grain will it report its findings? Will its reports be made public? Are we, as farmers, going to know what this council has to say about our welfare? As yet, no assurance has been given that this will be so. The Grains Council will report to the government. Will the government tell those whose livelihood is involved, whose well being is involved, what private discussions are being held behind doors, and what facts have been discovered?

The old Department of Trade and Commerce, now the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, traditionally played an important part in the welfare of the prairie farmers. It is necessary that those farmers have confidence in the department. I would say that, through the Canadian Wheat Board, farmers have displayed a fair amount of confidence in that department, in its honesty and in its fairness. Sometimes there have been some rather exaggerated wheat sale forecasts, but we take these with a grain of salt. We have lived a long time with them. But let me tell the minister that if the day comes when the farmer thinks he is being dealt with on a basis of less than complete frankness, much of that trust will disappear.

We have just come through a series of GATT negotiations, and I could not help but think that the Canadian farmer came out of them with very little. Recently, I read that a task force on agriculture is going to report at

the end of this month, and that it is going to recommend that wheat acreage be cut 30 per cent. That simply reinforces my previous judgment. A wheat acreage reduction of 30 per cent is a staggering proposition for the farmers of western Canada to accept.

Dr. Parnell of the Department of Agriculture is reported as saying that half of the farmers of Canada will be out of business by 1980. This staggers the imagination. We are going to have to make this kind of adjustment because our export markets have shrunk. That is the reason for it.

Out of the GATT negotiations came a reduction of the tariff on soybean oil going to Japan. There was no reduction on rapeseed, and so we are at a disadvantage. Recently, I asked the minister why there was an increase in the tariff on refined oil going into the Australian market but no increase in the tariff on the soybean product. Why are we being discriminated against in this fashion? Are we less able to carry our part in the tough negotiations that take place?

Mr. Pepin: It takes two to tango.

Mr. Gleave: The minister says it takes two to tango. I agree, but why do we come out with this disadvantage? If we are going to operate with this disadvantage in the export markets of the world, the forecasts that have been made will become an unfortunate and desperate reality. The wiping out of capital investment on the prairies will have to be seen to be believed. There will be a drop in the standard of living of the people involved until such time as they can leave the prairies and relocate elsewhere.

If you want to see the Golden triangle area grow in Ontario, just continue with this trend. We helped it grow during the depression years, after sending our sons and daughters to the war. They stayed in this area as a result of the terrific wiping out of capital which occurred on the prairies from 1929 until the early forties. This is what we remember. I am sure that the real magnitude of this situation is understood and that is the only reason I rose to speak to members of this committee this afternoon.

• (4:10 p.m.)

We hear a lot of talk, and plenty of advice from the press, to the effect that the thing for us to do today is get into feed grain production. They refer rather glibly to 400 million bushels of feed grain to be exported some place overseas. If we were unable under