

External Affairs

the Canadian government taking whatever steps are necessary to help meet this situation. I believe that members in all parts of this house are aware of the threat that communism presents to the free world. If we are to protect democracy as it exists in the world today, if we are to have that democracy extended, then we must help provide for every nation in the free world the economic basis upon which that democracy can flourish. In my opinion you cannot have democracy in a nation where millions of people face starvation.

In addition to the humanitarian reasons, I suggest that as part of the battle in stemming communism throughout the world, this government should take action now to provide the Indian people with large quantities of food. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the government should make a grant of at least \$100 million. This might purchase approximately 50 million bushels of wheat.

I know the minister of external affairs may say that we offered India some of the only kind of wheat we have in surplus supply, and India turned it down. As I understand it, the quantity of wheat that Canada has already offered to India was attached to the Colombo plan and its \$25 million. The government said India could take that wheat and sell it to the Indian people, then use the currency she obtained in return for the purchase of \$25 million worth of goods to be used for technical assistance. I believe a quantity of wheat could be obtained from Canada now of a grade that the people of India would find it possible to use for human consumption. We in Canada, as was suggested by the leader of this group, the member for Rosetown-Biggan (Mr. Coldwell) a week ago, should be prepared to accept a loaf made from wheat of slightly lower milling quality. By that means we could provide a quantity of wheat for the Indian people, even though it might not come anywhere near the 50 million bushels which I suggested.

Then again, I think it might be possible for the Canadian wheat board to put our No. 4 and No. 5 grade wheat through machines equipped for the purpose and have it separated into its various component grades. At least a portion of the No. 4 and No. 5 grade might be brought up to grades 2 and 3, even though the balance would thereby be placed in grade No. 6 or feed.

If that is not a practical suggestion, I have another suggestion to make. The United States has surplus wheat on hand. If the government were prepared to grant to the Indian nation \$100 million, that money might be used for the purchase of high grade wheat in the United States. If the United States

government felt that its surplus of wheat must not be reduced because this year's crop might be lower than average, or next year's crop might be lower than average, then I say the Canadian government should tell the United States that when the 1951 wheat crop comes along the Canadian government will sell to the United States an equivalent amount of wheat of the same grade.

I have made these three suggestions, Mr. Speaker, to point out that if the government really wanted to help India it would find a way. If the government had the will it could certainly find the way. We have found it possible—I am not complaining about it, rather I support it—to make \$1,600 million available for defence. Surely \$100 million to prevent death by starvation amongst millions of our fellow citizens in the commonwealth should not be an insurmountable task for either the government or the Canadian people.

So far this year we have exported fairly substantial quantities of whole and skim milk powder. Of the approximately 9,244 hundred-weight of milk powder exported from Canada in the first two months, only 100 hundred-weight was shipped to India. In other words, of the quantity of milk powder we have been exporting, India has received only slightly more than one per cent. Milk powder when it is reconverted to milk is as wholesome a food as the whole milk. A large quantity of milk powder sent to India might prevent the death of tens of thousands of infant children from malnutrition and starvation. I certainly believe that is another suggestion that the minister of external affairs, the Prime Minister and the government might consider.

When the minister of external affairs speaks in closing this debate, I should like him to give us some good reasons, if he can, why the government has not done something. I plead with him, with the Prime Minister and with the other members of the government, not to wait any longer, to recognize that Canadians are a generous people, and to bring down a measure which will provide for an immediate contribution of food to India.

Mr. H. A. MacKenzie (Lambton-Kent): Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to participate in this debate, but since it has run into the second day I feel that I should like to make a few observations. I shall try to be as brief as possible, having in mind what the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) said the other day about avoiding repetition. I shall try to avoid repeating what I have said on former occasions.

Last December I was one of the members privileged to attend the fifth session of the