

think the scheme that is contemplated, the farmer shipping his grain to-day, and retaining the right to sell when he thinks fit to sell, would be almost ineffective.

Q. That is to say, the judgment should be in the hands of the Board?—A. Absolutely, sir.

*By Mr. Millar:*

Q. The matter of the voluntary wheat pool has come up so often that I believe I ought to throw some light on the dark spot by asking this question. Under a voluntary pool would it not work out like this, that a man who has a threshing machine of his own, who lives close to an elevator, a man who year after year is able to take advantage of the early market, which is nearly always much better than the later market, would almost always stay out of the wheat pool? He would know that he could get better than the average price. The result is that the man who is now at a disadvantage is the man who would join the wheat pool. The wheat pool would have control of, say, 50 per cent of the grain, and the remaining 50 per cent would belong to the man who usually gets the early market, and if the pool should hold back what they control so as not to glut the market, they would be holding it back so that the other man would have the good market. Is that not the way it would work out?—A. It might very easily work out that way. I think there will be a very great difference of opinion, however, amongst the men who were close to the market. There would be the men who might figure the way you say, and there would also be the men who would figure, "Now, that may be a better price than somebody else gets." That is to say, "There is available to me in the open market a better price than somebody else may get, but I am not sure that price could not be influenced by marketing through the agency," your pool agency. That is, influenced upwards, or steadied. I think there would be a difference of opinion on that question.

*By Mr. Johnson (Moosejaw):*

Q. Mr. Riddell, right on that point, assuming that there was a voluntary pool, knowing conditions as you do, and as we from the West do, and the farmers' obligations, would there not be pressure brought on the farmer by his creditors to compel him to sell to the agency, whereby he would get the total value of his wheat when he delivered it?—A. Well, of course, I would not pretend to know what would be in the minds of our financial institutions, but if past experience is anything to go by I would think there would be a great possibility of that, that is, of attempting to liquidate their loans and to get their debts paid as fully and as quickly as possible.

*By Mr. Morin:*

Q. Mr. Riddell, in reply to the first question by Mr. Stevens, you stated that the great advantage of the compulsory Wheat Board would be the control of wheat. I infer from that that the Wheat Board would be in a position to completely control the price of wheat in Canada, that there would thus be a great advantage to the farmers, but that most probably the consumer would have to pay for it. Now, would the compulsory Board have also the power to control the price of wheat in the foreign market in competition with the other wheat-selling countries?—A. Well, your remark consists of a statement and a question as I understand it. I do not know that I altogether agree with your statement.

Q. Control of wheat—what does it mean?—A. You said that the Wheat Board could have control of the domestic market and make the consumer pay any price it liked. I say that is not so. I do not admit your statement to start with, and you have asked a question that is based on a statement that I do not admit, for the reason that the legislation under which the Wheat Board acted stated that the price must be based as nearly as possible on the export values. It was lower than the export values, very much lower than the export values, for a long period of time, so you see I cannot admit your statement.

[Mr. F. W. Riddell.]