

Wheat Export Prices

in the spirit of the Washington meetings. Frankly, I prefer not to comment on that subject at this time because it would not be wise so to do; it would not be in the best interests of Canadian farmers and of the Wheat Board. We have not yet heard from Australia and the European Economic Community on that subject.

This morning the Canadian Wheat Board announced its own adjustments to cope with the new situation created by the United States move and moves made previously by other exporters. As hon. members know, price reductions announced this morning range from 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ th cents a bushel to eight cents a bushel for spring wheat, depending on grade and export position. These are the corrective measures we have had to take.

I have been asked whether this is the final move or only the first round. It is not possible for me to predict this, because I do not know what will be the reaction of other countries to the Canadian announcement. The Canadian government hopes that a new plateau has been reached and exporting countries will rally at that level. It is not possible to know what the future has in store.

The two hon. members who spoke before me seemed to find this an extraordinary situation and said it was catastrophic that in the last year Canada exported only about 310 million bushels. I shall try to put the record straight. I am not trying to make anything out of these figures but simply to put forward the right assessment of the situation. The golden years to which the two hon. members referred, in comparison with this year's picture were extraordinary in Canadian wheat history. In order to assess more precisely what present exports are, I think one should refer to figures for a number of previous years. I quote the following figures for the record: 1958-59, 294.5 million bushels; 1959-60, 277.3 million bushels; 1960-61, 353.2 million bushels; 1961-62, 358 million bushels; 1962-63, 331.3 million bushels:

One has to bear these figures in mind. When one comes to more recent years, the figures rise tremendously: 1963-64, 594.1 million bushels; 1964-65, 399.6 million bushels; 1965-66, 584.9 million bushels; 1966-67, 516.3 million bushels; 1967-68, 335.6 million bushels; and this year about 305 million or 310 million bushels. But 1963-64 and 1965-66 were extraordinary years. However, when one tries to assess the present situation in regard to Canadian exports one has to consider a longer

period of years, and 310 million bushels is not such a catastrophic export figure.

All kinds of figures have been quoted about the percentage of Canadian exports compared with those of other exporters. The figure 10 per cent was quoted by the Leader of the Opposition. I should like to know where he got that figure. The figure I have here in respect of Canadian exports for 1968 is 19.20 per cent. For the previous year the figure was 17 per cent, for the previous year 26 per cent, and for 1965 27 per cent. The figure for 1959 was 20 per cent, for 1958 22 per cent, for 1956 21 per cent, and so on. Therefore, there is no tremendous difference which could create the impression that is being created here today.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I do not know that it matters very much, but the minister was not referring to what I said; he was referring to the figures quoted by the leader of the New Democratic party.

Mr. Pepin: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I apologize if I gave the wrong impression.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege, the figures I quoted the minister will find in table No. 1, copied from figures released by the F.A.O. and submitted to the minister and his colleagues in a brief presented by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture on May 28, 1969. These figures are given taken from the F.A.O. and deal with Canada's share of the world's grain trade.

• (4:10 p.m.)

Mr. Pepin: There are all kinds of ways of assessing these things. You have commercial, non-commercial, concessional sales and so on. I would have to go into detail in order to make a proper assessment. Mr. Speaker, we now have a situation in wheat production that is, I do not know whether I should say abnormal, but certainly strange.

Mr. Woolliams: I have never seen it so strange.

Mr. Pepin: Stay with us and you will see other things that are strange. The last three years have seen exceptional harvests. As a matter of fact, all over the world in each of the last three years a record has been broken. As a result it is obvious that the grain trade in the world has gone down substantially.

In the year 1965-66 the world trade totalled 2.3 billion bushels. In the most recent crop year, shipment of wheat was less than 1.7