

*Wheat Sales*

market prices so they can make enough profit to live and go on with their operations.

Mr. Speaker, it is a real disaster we are witnessing. And I refer to a newspaper article to establish a comparison between the situation in 1972 and what is now going on.

In 1972, 367 auction sales announcements were published in the newspaper *La Terre de Chez Nous*. That was on January 24. This year, from January till May, 124 announcements were published and up to now, 230 auction sales have taken place.

In my area, where the soil is rich, in Dorchester, in the parishes of Saint-Anselme, Saint-Gervais, Saint-Charles—all nice agricultural parishes—they publish, to my great concern, that the number of farms is decreasing very considerably, and I shall dispense with the figures.

I simply want to draw the attention of the Minister of Justice and of the government on the fact that we now live a dramatic situation. The people who leave their farms where they used to produce milk, hogs, eggs or poultry will be on the labour market. Will they find employment or will they live on welfare? This is what has to be considered. If they live on welfare and if the number of farms is reduced in the east, the market will also be reduced for western grain and feed grain producers. It is a chain; it is linked together.

It is well to seek markets overseas but we have a national market which could be well established and which would be able to absorb a good quantity of the grain products of our country, which are needed by our people. This would enable us to export processed products, grain transformed into pork or beef or into any other kind of food. Mr. Speaker, this is why I call the attention of the government on this serious problem and I think that the official opposition was well inspired today to raise the matter mentioned in the motion.

I hope indeed that they will consider the suggestions and remarks that we are making, so that in a very near future, not in five or ten years—

• (1700)

[*English*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but the time allotted to him by the Standing Order has expired. He could, however, continue if there is unanimous consent.

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Bell:** No. Mr. Speaker, there should not be any extra time.

**Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie):** Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon, despite the comments made by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang), and despite the comments made by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Gleave). The hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar made one of the weakest speeches I have ever heard him make when speaking about agriculture. It seemed to indicate that his party intends to support the government, even after he indicated various ways in which the government has not acted in the manner in which he would have liked to see it act. The minister's defence was somewhat strange, although not

[Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse).]

unexpected. Since when is an attack on a minister responsible for the Wheat Board supposed to be an attack on the Wheat Board itself?

The minister made a colossal blunder three years ago with the introduction of the ridiculous Lift program, which was contrary to all the practices carried on in the past. In fact every economist in the department, and every newspaper editorial, indicated that the west must develop over the years. One can recall the bulldozers that went to work because the idea was to open up more land for development. After the last war, the idea was that one should buy larger equipment and acquire more land. Then along came the minister, a real genius, a lawyer, one of the best because he taught law, who told the farmers what to do. He reversed the whole idea. Everyone had borrowed money under the farm improvement loan program in order to purchase machinery, and then along comes the minister who introduces the Lift program.

**Mr. Baldwin:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege to say, as a member of the bar, that I object to the way in which the hon. member described the Minister of Justice with regard to his practice at the bar. I think my standing in the profession would be sadly jeopardized otherwise.

**Mr. Korchinski:** Since when is an attack on the minister supposed to be an attack on the Canadian Wheat Board? That is the statement made by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar. Since when is mention of the fact that the minister was following that Liberal agricultural bible, the report of the task force on agriculture, supposed to be an attack on the Wheat Board. The fact is that the minister has drained the grain supplies to the point where the Wheat Board has had to turn down sales. Since when is an attack on some of those policies regarded as an attack on the Wheat Board. If this minister had not followed that green bible, the report of the task force on agriculture, so religiously and interfered with the operations of the Wheat Board which resulted in a drain on the grain from commercial position, the Wheat Board would not be in the position today of having to ask the farmers to deliver grain because there is a potential sale. The Wheat Board is in the position of having to say that it does not have the grain and of having to ask the producers to please deliver.

Since when is an opposition motion containing a suggestion to a government which will not act regarded by the NDP, of all people, as something ridiculously wrong. They suggest that we should be talking perhaps about a plebiscite. Why would we want to consider something like that at this particular time? We are trying to get the minister off his backside. We want to give him a few ideas. I know the member for Saskatoon-Biggar said he followed the Agriculture Committee reports very religiously. He said something about the price of barley. Who has mentioned anything about the price factor in respect of barley in relation to this motion? What we are asking in this motion is that there be an immediate increase in the initial payment of 30 cents.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Korchinski:** I say to the minister that if he cannot get the farmers to deliver at the present price he should at