

## Grain—Deficiency Payments

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):**—suggest that it was wrong for those of us sitting on this side of the house, including the hon. member for Assiniboia, to use this forum for raising matters which we regard as important to a particular and important section of our country. Hon. gentlemen opposite with their vast numbers should have learned by this time that although they do have a preponderant numerical position in this house, every hon. member has the right notwithstanding the convenience or the inconvenience to some hon. members sitting on the treasury benches to raise matters which they regard as urgent and important.

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

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** The hon. gentleman who just spoke did say that he did not think the House of Commons was a place where this problem could be resolved.

**Mr. Brunsten:** Would the hon. member permit a question?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** In one sense the hon. gentleman is right.

**An hon. Member:** He didn't say that.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** But only in one sense because the decision rests not with any hon. member of this house but with those hon. gentlemen who sit on the treasury benches. The decision for giving relief to the farmers of western Canada rests at this time—let there be no mistake about it, as the hon. gentlemen said—upon those who today have the responsibility for formulating the agricultural policy of the government of Canada. But it is open to all of us, wherever we sit, to take advantage of the procedures of the house and to bring home to the government what we believe to be situations of an urgent character, what we believe are the demands or the requests or the submissions put forward by various groups. It is all very well to chastise the numerical inferiority of the opposition—

**An hon. Member:** It is not only numerical.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):**—but let there be no mistake about it that those of us who sit under the leadership of the present Leader of the Opposition will take advantage of every opportunity to bring home to the government what we regard as the legitimate complaints of various sections of the country.

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** Will the hon. member permit a question?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** And when hon. members interrupt me as they now do let it not be forgotten that they have as their leader a man who was the first to criticize interruptions of this kind as being one form of closure which was not in keeping with our parliamentary traditions.

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

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** The Prime Minister (Mr. Diefenbaker), as you will recall, Mr. Speaker—

**An hon. Member:** Let's hear about wheat.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):**—when you had a different status in this house—

**An hon. Member:** We want hogs.

**An hon. Member:** Oh.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):**—referred to this kind of interruption as contempt of parliament. Some hon. member says "Oh", but he was not in this house at that time. However, if my hon. friend will read *Hansard* and if he will follow the newspaper accounts for the past decades he will find that the kind of observation I am now making was made by his leader with regard to some hon. gentlemen who did not like what he was saying, and one member had to be retrieved from this obstruction by the then minister of agriculture, who had done so much for the farmers of this country.

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

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** Hon. members opposite do not like the hon. member for Assiniboia or other members on this side of the house asking the government for a statement of policy at this time.

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** Would the hon. member permit a question?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** Yes.

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** In view of the fact that during the years 1940 to 1950 the Canadian farmers subsidized the rest of Canada in the sale of their wheat, would he say whether he would call the supplement payment or deficiency payment a form of relief?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** My hon. friend will not think that I disregard the importance of his question if I do not deal with it at this particular moment. How often have we heard in this house hon. gentlemen including the present Prime Minister, including the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Harkness), including other hon. gentlemen on that side of the house when they sat in opposition, talking about the plight of the farmer in western and other sections of Canada, and asking the government to proclaim policy.

Shortly after the farm unions had come to Ottawa to meet the cabinet, the present Prime Minister, rising the next day, was demanding that the government should state its policy with respect to the requests placed before the government by the farm organizations at that time. The farmers' union came to