

Agricultural Policies

ad hoc program failed to come to grips and failed to take account of the needs of the farmer.

Let me point out, Mr. Speaker, that on the cost side the government has had some reports which offered it an approach to some of the needs of agriculture. The Barber commission report indicated that we should do something about the cost of machinery and made several suggestions. If any of these suggestions have been implemented they have not been reported to this House. One suggestion was for a reverse dumping duty but apparently the government has decided against this although this would have been a most effective tool.

Reports of the Ontario food commission stated flatly that there was payola—I suppose bribery is the proper term—in the wholesaling of food and food products of western—

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry, but I have to interrupt the hon. member since his time appears to have expired. He can continue with the unanimous consent of the House. Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

An hon. Member: Call it five o'clock.

Mr. Gleave: Fine, I don't mind. If it bores you, I am sorry.

May I make a correction, Mr. Speaker? I said the payola in western Canada, but I should have said eastern Canada since the Ontario food commission was investigating a situation that existed in eastern Canada.

Mr. Paproski: Shameful.

Mr. Gleave: They said flatly that there was discrimination against local producers in Ontario. I have no knowledge of any action by the federal government to correct this situation or to demand an investigation by the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission. The government should insist that these farmers at least have access to a competitive market, Mr. Speaker, not a controlled market. They are being denied the ordinary right of a Canadian to take their products into the marketplace and face those with whom they seek to compete.

I appreciate the House giving me this extension of time, Mr. Speaker, and in conclusion I want to say that these are the areas which require consideration—the over-all policy, costs, marketing and fiscal policy. A fiscal policy that throws hundreds of thou-

[Mr. Gleave.]

sands of Canadians onto the labour market without employment has its effect on agriculture. Agriculture is the other side of the picture and if it is in a depressed state affects unemployed people in Brantford, say, and other places in Ontario.

Mr. H. W. Danforth (Kent-Essex): We, the members of the official opposition, certainly wish to support the motion put forward by the hon. member of the New Democratic Party on this opposition day. The motion indicates that the present policies of the government are far from appropriate to meet the present demands facing farmers today in all segments of the agricultural business. When dealing with agriculture policies, one is left wondering what actually is the basic policy of this government. When they took power six years ago they indicated in speeches before groups interested in the agriculture industry that they had the answers. Not only did the government have the answers, but it had the determination to make these solutions effective immediately. The government has been in power for nearly seven years and the agricultural industry of this country has had the opportunity to assess the results of this aggressive and dynamic approach to agriculture. Well, Mr. Speaker, although the government has been in power almost seven years I may say, without fear of contradiction, that every single segment of our agricultural industry today, with the possible exception of that engaged in beef and pork production, is in dire economic straits the like of which have not been experienced since the 1930's.

Mr. Olson: There are a few more exceptions, you know.

• (12:20 p.m.)

An hon. Member: The minister should resign.

Mr. Danforth: So grave is the situation that some farmers must now decide whether they will seek and be able to obtain the credit which is necessary if they are to continue farming for just one more year.

Mr. McCleave: The government ought to resign.

Mr. Danforth: The policy of the present government and its immediate predecessor has been to lower tariff barriers that have prevented the importation of food from other countries. This is the government's policy and these barriers will be lowered on a progres-