

zations. Neither today or in the future must we again allow government legislation that creates a disadvantage to farmers in any region of the country. We must never again allow a program like LIFT to contribute to the destruction of the agricultural industry. The farmer should have the inherent right to manage his farm operation as he sees fit, and he should have access to appropriate farm management training if he requires it.

If supply management and farm marketing boards are to be established, the decision to do so must be made by the commodity groups themselves. If these basic and simple principles are followed, agriculture will recover and the agricultural way of life will survive. If the present policies of the government are followed, agriculture will not survive.

● (1630)

[Translation]

**Mr. Marcel Lessard (Lac-Saint-Jean):** Mr. Speaker, in the few minutes the hon. member for Athabasca (Mr. Yewchuk) used in support of his motion, I would have expected, as my colleagues surely did, from a man like him, with as much personality and university training, that the positive would have had the upper hand on the negative. But he chose to stick to the pessimistic side of things, to the negative, and hold the government responsible for all agricultural problems.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the motion of the hon. member is good. I agree fully with its wording, in that sense that the government must surely study the problem of the exodus from the land, the decreasing number of farms and the resulting social and economic problems.

I feel we are unanimous in this House in deploring the rural depopulation. We deplore it for a number of reasons. First because it is a social problem at the level of the individuals and families concerned, and second because it gives rise to immediate economic hardship. It is mainly an economic problem and a long term danger. As in the past, but certainly to a greater extent in the future, governments will be called upon to share in the efforts to stop this tendency and find means to quiet down this unrest. It goes without saying that we, as members of this House, must all be behind this.

However, I cannot buy the statement made by the hon. member that this government is responsible for the rural depopulation which started ten years ago, specifically in 1963. He was very careful in choosing that year, for it was in fact in 1963 that the Progressive Conservative Party was defeated and replaced by the Liberal Party. He claimed that this unrest did not exist before 1963. I must regretfully revive his memory and ask him, although he is still very young, to go back a little further in the past, let us say, 10, 15, or even 20 years. Let us go back to the 1940's at least, when the war broke out. At that time, of course, industries developed throughout Canada. Naturally the war caused a certain manpower shortage. Young people particularly had many career opportunities in fields other than farming. These young people left the farm. The movement of the population from the farming and rural sectors did not start ten years ago, but 30 or 40 years ago. This phenomenon is not unique to Canada. It is interna-

### *Family Farm*

tional, American, Canadian, European, Mr. Speaker. The government cannot therefore be blamed for the situation.

On the other hand, I agree with the hon. member when he says we must press the government, the provincial-federal institutions to think of the best measures possible to keep rural people where they are and help farmers find adequate people to take over. But that, Mr. Speaker, can happen only with one policy, a policy providing farmers with a sufficient income to justify their investments and the amount of work they have to put into their farm. And that is where the basic problem lies.

If farmers are unable to get a sufficient income or one that can be compared to that of other groups of society, why should they have to keep on sacrificing themselves? Why should we, as Canadians, require that 10 or 15 per cent of the Canadian people should sacrifice themselves by working seven days a week, 10 or 12 hours a day, by investing hundreds of thousands of dollars, by taking great risks in order to provide the Canadian people, the consumers as a whole food supplies adequate as to the quantity and quality and, as everybody hopes, at very low prices?

Such an equation, Mr. Speaker, is simply impossible. We the Canadian people must decide to pay the price of the food we want to be, adequate as to quantity and quality. That is the essential condition if we want to keep farming people in rural areas. To providing the farmer with the necessary help in his work, is the essential condition to make sure that he will be able to keep with him his sons, his children who will replace him later on. And that important question of the family farm, Mr. Speaker, that we uphold in a stirring way, I would like to defend it myself! What is exactly a family farm?

If it is the family farm of 25, 40 or 50 years ago, when this type of farm was handed down from grandfather to father to son, without this debt being incurred—and I emphasize this point—as has been the case now since the last generation, if this is the type of family farm that the hon. member means, then I would remind him the following: the owner of the family farm today does no longer wants that this situation be perpetuated. He is the one who decides that his farm is worth \$100,000 and who requires the future owner to pay that amount. Of course, the latter must go into debt, if the required capital is not available to him. If it is, he must make this investment. And then, the family farm can no longer be maintained in the same conditions. I wish, Mr. Speaker, we could do so. I wish we did, because it really was a good formula, but is it realistic to advocate such a formula in 1973? That is impossible. Let us be realistic, we cannot contemplate to go on using this formula. Then, we should accept that fact and consider how this farm operated by a family will continue to exist. Mr. Speaker, I ask the government, and I am not the only one, as several of my colleagues do so, to develop a new policy that will enable the son, the young farmer, the young man who is talented and willing to go into that industry which is vital for our economy, to get a start because his father will not be able to give him the \$20,000 or \$25,000 he needs.