

*Adjournment Debate*

● (1815)

I hope the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) will announce in his press conference tomorrow programs such as are available to United States and European farmers. Such programs would solve the problems for many farmers by assuring at least the cost of production in deficiency payments. As I said earlier, extraordinary drops in farm income demand extraordinary action. We would appreciate an indication of the Government's action now.

**Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Prince Albert (Mr. Hovdebo) raises a concern that is felt by all of us connected with agriculture in Canada. I should point out that it is not only an issue affecting western Canada—which many people have come to believe is the grain growing area of Canada—it also affects the total Canadian agricultural picture.

When we consider the amount of grain produced in various provinces of the country and rank them in order of the amount of grain produced, the Hon. Member's home Province of Saskatchewan is the largest producer; Alberta is the second largest; Ontario is third, followed by Manitoba. The fact is that Ontario produces a large amount of grain and is very much affected by what the Hon. Member for Prince Alberta referred to as an extraordinary situation.

It is an extraordinary situation, and we face a very difficult market as a result of the Europeans and the Americans essentially engaging in a price war. In my view, it is largely brought on by the actions of the European community as a result of dramatically increasing agricultural production, especially in the grain sector, through some very large subsidies.

Let me point out that it is not in any way the strategy of this Government to eliminate farmers. I hesitate to even dignify that question with an answer. The Hon. Member should know very well that this Government supports agriculture. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said at a press conference some two weeks ago that: "there's more we have to do for western agriculture and we're going to try to do it within the constraints imposed upon us by this economic situation". That is certainly a refreshing attitude on the part of a Prime Minister of this country, not only on behalf of western agriculture but Canadian agriculture as a whole.

I believe that our record in terms of supporting agriculture, especially western agriculture, has been very good. In the calendar year 1985, the federal Government was responsible for close to \$1.5 billion of new initiatives or ongoing initiatives in western Canada to support the grain industry. That is a significant amount of money, and it should indicate that the Government is very willing to support agriculture.

The Hon. Member heard the Prime Minister state in Question Period today that Canada intended to raise the agricultural trade issue at the Tokyo meeting. Again, that

indicates this Government's support for Canadian agriculture. In anticipation of the Tokyo meeting, the Prime Minister will be meeting a group of farm representatives from across the country on Thursday to hear their concerns and let them know that we in fact are concerned about agriculture.

I believe that our record of support for agriculture is good. We want to maintain that record and do whatever we can to improve it so that Canadian farmers are not the casualties in this very severe price war between the European community and the United States.

● (1820)

TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS GOODS—REQUEST THAT LEGISLATION BE STRENGTHENED

**Mr. Bill Attewell (Don Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, some time ago I asked the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) about the status of legislation concerning the transportation of dangerous goods. He informed the House that broad regulations covering the transportation of dangerous goods were proclaimed on July 1, 1985. The regulations cover all modes of transportation; air, water, rail and road. Interprovincial transport by road was the only important mode of transportation not covered by these regulations because it is a provincial not federal jurisdiction. As of February of 1986, the provinces and the territories adopted similar legislation to cover transportation of dangerous goods by road and which enforced the transportation of dangerous goods regulations. The ultimate aim of the transportation of dangerous goods regulations is to create a set of uniform regulatory requirements which apply to all means of transportation.

The Act and regulations are an attempt to rationalize the transportation of dangerous goods across Canada. Dangerous goods such as toxic chemicals, highly flammable or explosive products, radioactive materials, corrosives and so on constitute a real threat to our communities when they are not transported safely. The Mississauga derailment in 1979, in which a train containing cars of chlorine gas derailed, resulted in a massive evacuation of the city of Mississauga for several days. Fortunately, no lives were lost during this emergency. However, there are certainly no guarantees that we will be so lucky again.

The mode of transportation, the type of container, and the labelling of materials are all important aspects which contribute to the safer transportation of dangerous goods. Another factor which is of great concern to many, including the Corporation of the City of Toronto and a group of concerned citizens called "M-TRAC", the Metro-Toronto Residents' Action Committee for Rail Safety, is the speed at which trains pass through densely populated urban areas.

In March of this year the City of Toronto submitted a brief to the Acting President of the Canadian Transport Commission and to the Chairman of the Railway Transport Committee requesting that train speeds be reduced to 25 miles per hour on the CP North Toronto subdivision line. The brief points out that in 1981, the Railway Transport Committee