

generosity of the Canadian Wheat Board, the cattle of the province of Quebec would certainly have been deprived of feeds.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to the Canadian Wheat Board, I wish it were solely at the service of the western grain producers, and at the same time the opportunity of selling at a higher price abroad—which is entirely normal, everyone works for more—but let us beware that we are not taken with that.

It is all very nice to sell at a higher price abroad, but if, at the same time we destroy our production in Canada, we will then be forced to import from outside and then they will sell to us at the prices we used with them and we may then be in an unfavourable position.

I heard, a while ago, the member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) say that he did not propose a solution. Mr. Speaker, I think that the solution proposed by the UPA, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture was good before the split in Ottawa between the UPA and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture; the proposals brought forward were that there must be a difference between the price of a bushel out west and in the east, but not of a dollar.

After a study of the problem, we recognize that there could be a difference of 30 to 32 cents per bushel. This can vary. It can be less, but more than that is unjust. In fact, it is not up to the producer of grains to bear the loss. This is where the central government comes into view. This is why it is at the centre. It must try to give justice to right and left, to east and west.

If the western grain producers lose, it would be up to the central government to vote moneys, putting at the disposal of the Canadian Wheat Board funds to compensate western grain producers. Then they would not produce at a loss; they would not improve their position, but they would be treated fairly, and the eastern producers could get their supplies at prices enabling them to remain competitive in the production of beef, pork and poultry; their prices could then equal those of other provinces.

This is the proposed solution and I endorse it completely. I make it my business tonight, as a member for a rural riding, to ask once more a certain number of things to the Minister of Agriculture. He sits there smiling, I see something coming which will make us proud, I hope.

In any event, I like to give thanks where thanks are due, but I do not hesitate to say frankly what I have in mind, when I am disappointed. I do wish to say means things before I am disappointed, because I hope I will not be.

I expect that in a few days, Canada will finally have a really equitable feed grain policy; I also hope that all the provinces will be taken into consideration and I am then convinced, Mr. Speaker, that the farming industry, the main and the best one, may hope for better days, survive and interest young people in its survival.

● (2100)

[English]

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, the motion before us tonight in one of its parts specifically suggests that a difficulty arises because of our not having announced a new policy in regard to feed grains, and the fact that a great deal of discussion and excitement is going

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on, particularly in the three prairie provinces, about certain rumours and stories in respect of what the policy may be.

It had been our intention to announce a feed grain policy in relation to the marketing of domestic feed grains before today. That was our original intention. I find it somewhat ironic that a good part of the reason for our deciding not to do that relates to the request of a number of people, including the NDP leader of Saskatchewan, after learning that we might announce such a policy before the July 24 to July 26 conference. We indicated that we would announce it and then be prepared to discuss this policy and its impact when we would meet with the premiers in Calgary. The Premier of Saskatchewan asked us in very strong language not to make such an announcement until after that date, and we subsequently decided to go along with that request. We felt this would allow us time to have further serious discussions about the matter, and discussions by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) with his counterparts, in a meeting which is scheduled for July 25.

The difficulty I have tonight lies in the fact that in not announcing a policy I cannot elaborate on it. I can only give certain ideas while trying to indicate what the policy is and is not, without making any firm announcement tonight. What we are trying to do is clear, and I would appreciate frank and open statements from members of the opposition on whether they agree or disagree with some of the fundamental questions that exist in this area.

The Speech from the Throne indicated that the government supports the principle of an equitable relationship in prices of feed grains to livestock feeders in various areas of Canada. It also indicated that we intended to move forward with a policy to put this into effect. Those words did not come out of the blue, and are not without a context; they come from a context of serious discussions which have been going on over several years in Canada regarding inequitable prices of feed grains in this country. These words result from a two-year struggle with the question raised by main farm organizations and by a farmers parliament composed of individuals, farm groups and provincial agricultural ministers and officials assembled together to say how to arrive at a solution which would be agreeable to everyone. They did not come up with a solution which they could agree on. So we were left with the problem. Indeed, I think it was Mr. Ted Boden, president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture, who went so far as to recite the fact that there had been a failure to find a solution. He is reported to have said:

But the west had not arrived at any suitable compromise policy so we can hardly bellyache if the government doesn't come down with a policy suitable to us.

That is only his opinion, not mine, because I want to assure the House that it continues to be my role to see that the policy which is developed is fair and suitable to all parts of this country. This is one of the matters I want to put most seriously to hon. members opposite. I want to say, first of all, that the context of this discussion has been made very clear. We believe in a policy in this country which will support a growing grain and meat industry. We believe in a policy which will enhance the growing of