

*Canadian Livestock Feed Board*

of the expected consumption, would the board cover the risk of filling up the elevators of the areas concerned with, as sole guarantees, the consumption statistics of previous years?

Section 7 says that it shall be the duty of the board to make a continuing study of the requirements in eastern Canada and British Columbia. I hope that the word "study" here is only a word, because the time for study has been over long since and I suppose the minister will understand that now is the time for action.

In the same clause we read that the board will have to make recommendations to the minister and generally advise the government. I wonder whether the government will become very sensitive to recommendations made by its own employees it has chosen and whose names will be on the payroll?

If the government says it is ready to accept advice, how is it that the same government has always turned a deaf ear to representations made in that field by associations of grain and feed dealers, co-operatives and farm unions, as the Catholic Farmers Union?

All these questions make us believe that this board will play a very important and very delicate part. Everything will depend also on the powers given the board and the way these powers will be used.

I hope that all the farmers in the areas concerned with this new board will always receive the information to which they are entitled, and that the board will be really sure it is in a position to meet their needs and that we will have a truly improved policy, because the farmer has been the forgotten man for too long. During election period, Conservatives as well as Liberals have always taken pleasure in reminding him that he is the king of the farm. If he ever was king, we have proof that he has been dethroned for a long time, because as far as finance is concerned, his position proves that he is inferior to the majority of the workers in industry and he is far behind the majority of other professionals.

And in spite of his efforts, there is no way out for him as he finds himself caught between the price he is offered and the one he must accept for his products, and prices have gone up in the past 20 years, in some instances by 50 per cent in the case of grain and 100 per cent in the case of concentrates needed for livestock feeding.

For the last 15 years, the prices offered the farmer for eggs, chicken, turkey or other

poultry have always been the same. The same thing can be said of meat such as beef, pork and other foodstuffs.

One must say he can hardly do something about it since he is dealing with perishable goods that he must deliver to the market as soon as they have reached the quality required by the consumer.

Such perishable products are none the less essential and farmers have proved that they know where their responsibilities lie.

I am convinced that it is precisely because they have fulfilled their duty too well that governments, regardless of who was in power, have ignored them.

The second reason why I think farmers are forgotten is because they have never honestly considered contributing to the election funds of the old line parties.

But the government realizes, I imagine, that it cannot rely indefinitely on the moral support of the farmers. The march on the Quebec Parliament organized by the farmers has proved that they can listen to electoral promises. But it has also proved that they can get together, between elections, to demand the passing of legislative amendments in their favour.

Therefore, we are anxious to see what this new board will do, and, if need be, we shall make further representations on behalf of this hardworking class which is not asking for charity but only for what is coming to them.

• (12:50 p.m.)

[English]

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Queens (Mr. MacLean).

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

**Hon. J. A. MacLean (Queens):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the applause from my associates on this side of the house.

**An hon. Member:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. MacLean (Queens):** And from the other side of the house as well in at least one case. In rising to take part in this debate I wish to say at the outset that I do not categorically oppose this legislation. I think it has the prospect of considerable merit. In any case, the situation is such that one can afford to be optimistic, because I think there is hardly any field in what one might call agricultural economics where there is more room for improvement than the feed grain program for eastern feeders.