

*Supply—Agriculture***SUPPLY**

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Flynn in the chair.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Research branch—

5. Branch administration including an amount of \$166,610 for grants in aid of agricultural research in universities and other scientific organizations in Canada, \$1,856,156.

(Translation):

Mr. Boulanger: Mr. Chairman, I should like to say a few words on this item and especially about research.

In the past, research activities have centered mostly on technical aspects of agriculture: land productivity, research on insecticides, fertilizers, etc. In my opinion, we have not attached sufficient importance to economic research. I do not mean that there should be less research on land productivity but I think greater attention could be given to economic research. I refer particularly to research on marketing both in Canada and abroad.

Just after the war, European countries organized their production and increased it substantially, and to such an extent that today we already have a hard time exporting our wheat. In a few years, with production methods improving from day to day in various countries we shall have even more difficulty in selling our wheat.

About a year ago, in a paper put out by Macdonald College in Montreal I read recommendations on what Canada should do to improve our marketing system. Unfortunately I do not have this paper here but I have a few notes that I would like to summarize for the information of the committee and especially for that of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Harkness).

According to that paper, the present situation calls for a long term program which Macdonald College has divided into two points:

First, we should survey the situation to find out what can be done on the domestic market.

Second, we should seek new and constructive ideas with regard to the world wheat market.

Canada it was said, should institute a research fund of about half a million dollars, to finance an intensive research plan over the next six or twelve months. Work under the plan would be divided between four or five teams. One team would be made up of professors and experts from universities in the prairie provinces; a second team would

[Mr. Rowe.]

include teachers from the universities of eastern Canada, a third would include individual researchers, while a fourth would consist of scientists selected by the government to be assigned to the various agencies or departments, such as the Department of Agriculture, the Canadian wheat board, the Departments of Trade and Commerce, External Affairs, Finance, etc. Finally, if deemed appropriate, our research effort might be pushed further with a fifth Canada-United States committee, made up of scientists and experts of both countries.

Canada has practically no scientists doing research in this field at the present time. The problem is quite difficult, and there is no assurance that such an investigation made by research teams would yield substantial results in the immediate future. However, it would be a start, and the government as well as the public would at least be made aware of the importance of the problem, a development that might bring forth new ideas.

This task should be undertaken as a means of finding an answer to the problems we will be facing within a few years, and particularly in the years just ahead. If the results were satisfactory, we could extend our research plan as far ahead as 1970 or 1975, and then, with such a long range program, we would know where we are going.

Those are a few thoughts I submit to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture, and I would ask him whether there is, within his department, a section which does research work in the sense I have just referred to.

(Text):

Mr. Harkness: Mr. Chairman, the item we are dealing with under the research branch has to do primarily with research into the natural sciences, research into soils, insect diseases and everything along that line. Economic research, about which the hon. member has been talking, is carried on by the economics branch and was dealt with in the previous item.

As was indicated last Friday when we dealt with item 4, the number of personnel in the economics branch of the department has been increased by 10, from 136 to 146. This is an indication that we are strongly cognizant of the fact that more economic research needs to be carried on. We have been increasing the manpower and other resources of the economics branch so that an expanded program of economic research can be carried forward, and we have been doing an increasing amount of research as far as marketing is