

Inquiries of the Ministry

pation has been rewarded at the rate of \$6 per acre and it will be rewarded at the rate of \$10 per acre for forage, using the amount of money for which farmers have applied. The other figure to which the hon. member referred was always hypothetical. It was based on the total possible participation by farmers.

PRODUCTION AND RECEIPTS POLICY—EARLY
INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

Mr. A. B. Douglas (Assiniboia): My question is directed to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board. In view of the failure to achieve a pricing arrangement at the wheat conference in Geneva and the fact that this makes an effective grain income stabilization plan even more desirable and urgent, can the minister state, as a result of his consultations with the Prairie Ministers of Agriculture earlier this week, that improvements have been made in the proposal tabled last October 29 and that legislation will soon be presented to Parliament which will permit the implementation of such an improved plan?

Mr. Baldwin: Answer yes or no.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board): There were fruitful discussions between myself and the Ministers of Agriculture from the Prairie provinces concerning the proposals as part of the process of coming to final conclusions. I look forward to the possibility of coming before the House with the necessary legislation and with policy decisions for implementation at a very early date.

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AGRICULTURE

SUGGESTED MORATORIUM ON REPAYMENT OF LOANS
TO WESTERN FARMERS

Mr. R. R. Southam (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the economic plight of a great many western farmers because of low grain sales over the past few years, would the minister give serious consideration to declaring a one-year moratorium on the repayment of farm improvement loans, Farm Credit Corporation loans and farm machinery syndicate loans in order to assist the western economy to make a reasonable comeback?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): I have indicated on a number of occasions that Farm Credit Corporation loan payments can be deferred by any farmer who can show that it is a very serious hardship for him to make these payments. It is not prudent to establish a general moratorium because there are some farm producers who are producing other products and whose receipts have not declined.

PROGRAMS TO ASSIST FARMERS BECAUSE OF RATIONALI-
ZATION OF INDUSTRY

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of

[Mr. Lang.]

Agriculture. Since a modified form of early retirement is being proposed for those workers in the textile industry who have lost their jobs as a result of the rationalization of that industry can the minister advise the House whether similar programs are being considered for those members of the agricultural industry who are also being victimized as a result of the rationalization process which is taking place within that industry?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, without accepting the preamble to the question, I can say that eight or ten months ago we announced we were working on a program to deal with the small farmers' problems.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Again, I point out that there are a number of hon. members who wish to ask supplementaries and I suggest that perhaps we should move to another subject. However, the Chair will recognize the hon. member for Vegreville at the moment and then go to another subject.

Mr. Mazankowski: In light of the evasive and flippant answer to the minister, can he tell the House—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member should ask a supplementary.

Mr. Mazankowski: I wonder if the minister could indicate to the House when he will have the fortitude to stand up and defend the agricultural—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre.

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GRAIN

INTERNATIONAL WHEAT CONFERENCE—CANADIAN POSI-
TION ON FOOD AID PROGRAM

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board. In view of reports that the United States was prepared to arrive at a pegged price for wheat, provided there was agreement amongst all participating countries to continue the food aid program, in which all exporting countries would participate, would the minister advise if Canada was the fly in the ointment on this issue, or did Canada support such a program?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board): Without accepting the preamble, Mr. Speaker, I would like to emphasize to the House that Canada at all times has supported the inclusion of a food aid program in any new agreement. We still look forward to that being included in the agreement to be arrived at soon.