

Supply—Agriculture

industries in other countries. The hon. member for Fraser Valley East might do well to study this article, in which the minister outlines the difficulties facing all farmers, even chicken farmers, as a result of the huge subsidies that some countries are prepared to provide for their own agricultural industries.

This is why I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition was quite sound in suggesting that one of the recommendations that should be made at the conference in March is for a world conference of all primary producers in the agricultural industry. The minister will probably reply that he has just returned from an O.E.C.D. conference on agriculture. However, that conference did not include representatives from the Asian countries. Asia during the last few years has become one of Canada's biggest markets, but now this market is shrinking vastly. The sad fact is that our market in the free world is also shrinking. I do not want to take up any more time on this subject, neither do I want the minister to feel confident that he is doing a good job. Ministers of agriculture have been studying agricultural problems for a long time but very little action has been taken in an attempt to solve them.

I should like to make a brief reference to the cattle industry. Recently I noticed a report that the United States has asked for a voluntary ban on Australian and New Zealand beef entering the United States. I should like to ask whether the government has taken note of this. If the United States is clamping down on Australian and New Zealand beef, will not these two countries now look to the Canadian market?

The livestock journal of Calgary recently carried an article dealing with Argentine beef, and it appears a lot of cooked and partially cooked beef has been exported to Canada and the United States from that country. If we are going to maintain our agricultural industry and keep it on a sound basis, we must guard against surplus products being dumped in Canada by competing nations.

I should now like to say a word or two about the over-all picture of agriculture. Since the government have taken office they have increased interest rates on loans provided under farming legislation. For example, the Farm Credit Corporation now charges $7\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, and the rate on farm improvement loans is $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. One rate moved up $2\frac{3}{4}$ percentage points, representing more than a 50 per cent increase in the cost of money. The

[Mr. Horner.]

government and the minister felt that raising these rates would be the best way of getting the farmers to participate in our economy. I must not forget to point out that recent changes to the Farm Credit Corporation legislation resulted in a benefit to the corporations.

The proposed changes to the Estate Tax Act will be of direct benefit to farming corporations, in that it will force farmers to become incorporated so as to prevent their land and homes being gobbled up by the payment of estate tax on the death of the father or owner of the farm.

An hon. Member: Socialism.

Mr. Horner: I hear the remark "socialism". I think this could be compared to the Russian system, under which eventually the government owns everything. It now appears that farmers cannot pass on their farms to their sons, unless they become good corporations. If our farmers get together and set up big corporations, what is going to be the next step—state farms? Is the government going to take over our farms completely and manage their production if they are overproducing? I do not know whether that will be the next step, but if it is I would not be surprised. If the government continue on their present course, I suggest that much of this industry will be lost. It will be lost through overproduction and managed control by those who control the economy, this economy which tends to direct farmers into larger and larger units and to destroy active participation by those same farmers in the government and in their operations generally.

● (8:20 p.m.)

Mr. Benjamin: I am happy I was unable to rise to speak until now because I must confess that all the afternoon, before the supper break, I had the feeling I had lost my temper, and that is not a good state to be in when one speaks in this chamber.

My first thought, after hearing the minister introduce these estimates, was, I must say: "Well, I'll be damned!" When the house moved into committee to hear the minister make his statement on these estimates, it was for one reason. The minister knows very well why these estimates were placed before the committee today rather than next week or the week after. It was to allow discussion of the grain crisis in western Canada. Well, in a speech lasting 20 or 30 minutes, the minister