

We all welcome the aggressive sales approach that has been taken in the last ten months. This only proves to me that markets have been available, and they will be available providing someone is prepared to go out and merchandise particularly our feed grains. We in this party have continually pressed the government for a more progressive merchandising policy, above all headed by someone who understands the business.

I cannot help but once more refer to the task force report on agriculture which draws attention to our blatant disregard for market research. Of the total amount of research devoted to agriculture, only 1.2 per cent has been set aside for marketing research. Another glaring weakness in our policy is that research data is not readily available in Canada. As a matter of fact, the data that was tabulated in the task force report was obtained largely from foreign sources, mostly from the United States.

I am sure there is no member of the House who does not welcome any measure that would improve the market potential of our agricultural products. However, the Speech from the Throne only touches on this subject very vaguely, merely suggesting that the government will continue to introduce programs designed to improve market potential for agricultural produce and to assist in the adjustment to changes in this vital sector of our economy.

The task force report clearly suggests that the need for more than that is obvious. If anyone is to place any credence in the report, it is abundantly clear that we will have to do much more than just continue along the lines we have adopted in the past. We must aggressively engage in market research programs that will provide the ways and means to anticipate, to plan, to implement, and of course to assess, the appropriate measures to capture the full market potential of our products.

Above all, in discharging this duty I believe it is of paramount importance that we engage qualified and knowledgeable people. I hope that hon. members will not be misled into the belief that the problems of agriculture in western Canada have been overcome by this vast array of publicity brought about in respect of improved grain sales. The lack of grain sales has been a chronic problem experienced by the Liberal government, and our sales performance has been nothing short of dismal in the last few years. There is a lot of catching up to do.

● (8:20 p.m.)

May I remind you as well that the grain which is being sold is largely barley at an elevator price of 60 cents a bushel. The elevator price for wheat is \$1 per bushel. When you subtract the advances of previous years, I suspect that the effective cash influx will be much less than the anticipated \$500 million figure which has been quoted.

Referring again to the task force report on agriculture, we see in it a broad approach to agriculture in the 1970's. Certainly, one could find ample opportunity to debate many of the recommendations contained therein. There is one area in which I feel the government will soon have

to make its plans known, and that is the future position of the small family farm.

It is clearly evident that the policies we have been dealing with in the past two years are directed toward larger, so-called viable enterprises, with little emphasis or consideration being directed toward the small enterprise. I believe this is a most pressing and urgent situation and the government owes a statement of intent in this regard because the small operators can no longer adjust to the arbitrary quotas on grain and on cream which are being discriminately placed upon them. The abolition of the 400 bushel unit quota has placed a severe hardship on small family operations. They, too, are being dealt a blow by the discriminatory practices of the Farm Credit Corporation in that they are not able to obtain any capital to expand.

These small family farm operators are concerned about the reference to the sorting-out process in the report on agriculture. This sorting out process suggests that only those farmers who operate aggressive and viable enterprises will survive. This matter creates a certain amount of apprehension and fear, particularly when we consider the high level of unemployment. Many of these people will be faced with little or no option other than to go on public welfare.

The mention of quotas leads me to the subject of the farm products marketing bill which has been referred to as a contentious measure. We in the Conservative party were accused of filibustering and killing the bill during the last session, even though many of our members cut our summer recess short to attend committee meetings studying this bill. Let me say here and now that this is a sweeping measure which demands comprehensive study. I make no apologies for being associated with a party dedicated to a thorough study of such a measure. The simple fact is that many people throughout the country have had some very serious second thoughts respecting this legislation, having had an opportunity to study it and realize its far-reaching implications. I remind you that the majority of those presenting briefs to the committee found many inadequacies in this bill. In practically all instances, the matter of producers' rights was clearly overlooked. This is particularly so in view of the fact that the intent of the bill was supposed to be directed toward the interests of producers.

I see you are sitting on the edge of your chair, Mr. Speaker. May I conclude by saying simply that a grain act, designed along similar lines was introduced. Again, in this regard, we have been accused of killing this bill. I want to remind hon. members that we are concerned about the direction in which the government is moving in respect of agriculture. I think it is very appropriately summed up in an address by Mr. D. R. Marshall, the president—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order please. I regret that it is my duty to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired.

Some hon. Members: Continue.