

Wheat Payments

look at the entire picture, something the Liberal government has not done in the last number of years. It has tended to respond in an ad hoc way to issues which have arisen. In the previous minority parliament it responded this way to pressures put on it, and it is still responding this way. The Liberal party is good at straddling both sides of the fence. You could get a lot of slivers that way. I am saying that this is good legislation, that it should not be an isolated instance, and that it should be followed by other legislation which will help our farmers to stay on the land. If they stay, and if their prices are guaranteed, they will produce food.

The world needs desperately the food Canadian farmers can produce. The days of the LIFT program and the old stabilization plan are over. They will not come back. The first two or three years after the minister in charge of the Wheat Board assumed his current responsibilities were among the darkest Canadian grain farmers have ever experienced.

Mr. Cliff McIsaac (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak in support of this bill which will implement a two-price system for wheat, something that has been promised for years, and talked about by members of all parties in this House.

I was really pleased to hear the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) say he will support the bill. He took a lot of time reviewing other issues which have nothing to do with the bill, but after talking a long time he decided, as the NDP has done both in this House and in provincial forums across the country, to support it.

I was disappointed in the remarks of the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski). His party at one time had the chance to implement this kind of policy, but did not take it. It has finally been introduced by the minister who sits in front of me, the hon. member for Saskatoon-Humboldt (Mr. Lang).

The hon. member for Vegreville was being irresponsible in criticizing the bill because it did not deal with some minor issues. He raised some interesting points, however. For instance, if in two or three years the \$5 figure does not seem to meet the need, it can be changed. The point is that we are adopting a principle, one I am happy to support and one which has the support of many provinces.

We are dealing with the establishment of a two-price system. This bill will establish that two-price system and the minister should be proud of it. I think practically every member of the House supports it. Hon. members ought to consider some points made by the hon. member for Vegreville. Perhaps we should do for feed grains what we are doing for wheat. Perhaps that way we could provide part of the answer for the difficulties besetting the livestock industry. Perhaps this principle ought to be applied to that industry.

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, is the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley (Mr. McIsaac) prepared to tell wheat producers in his constituency that \$60 million is a small issue? That is what we are talking about. He criticized the remarks of the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski), but I cannot accept \$60 million as a small issue. The fact is that when the government offered

[Mr. Nystrom.]

to support the grain industry to the tune of \$50 million a few years ago, it felt it was providing the western grain producers with a great benefit.

Let me point out that approximately 60 million bushels of western grain are used for the domestic industry and approximately seven million or eight million bushels of wheat are purchased from wheat growers in Ontario.

For the information of hon. members, the world price of grain today is \$6.20 per bushel, which means that the western Canadian producer is subsidizing the industry to the tune of \$1.20 per bushel. That is not chicken feed and must be looked at seriously. We will not be able to live with this in the future. That is why we, on this side of the House, are prepared to move an amendment in committee. Hopefully the minister will accept it and other minor changes which are acceptable to the farmers he represents. May I call it ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—EXTENSION OF JURISDICTION OVER COASTAL WATERS—POSSIBILITY OF UNILATERAL ACTION

Mr. Walter C. Carter (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, my question to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and to the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen) of October 3 was prompted by statements that were made by two ministers, the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Jamieson) and the then minister of fisheries, Hon. Jack Davis, during the July 8 election campaign. The statements in question concerned the Law of the Sea Conference and the action allegedly proposed by the government if our country's position with respect to jurisdiction over our off-shore resources was not accepted by the member nations represented at the conference.

Both ministers are reported to have said categorically that the government was prepared to act on its own and declare unilaterally its jurisdiction over the continental shelves off our coasts. The Minister of Regional Economic Expansion made the statement in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, on June 24, at a political rally at which the Prime Minister was present. The former minister of fisheries, Mr. Davis, made a similar comment in a statement which was prepared by him in Vancouver and released in Halifax on June 15, to coincide with the closing meeting being held there of the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries, ICNAF.

● (2200)

In reply to my question of October 3 the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) questioned the accuracy of the press reports to which I referred. At the same time he stated