

*Oral Questions*

course of action the Government can take to deal with the crisis in grain growing?

**Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)):** Mr. Speaker, beginning in January and February I had meetings with all of the pool presidents, the presidents of the grain companies and other industry people in the west to discuss this very situation and try to make sure that everyone basically understood the situation as we saw it in the Government, and attempted to make sure everyone understood the serious situation that we faced internationally.

As we said yesterday in Winnipeg, I realized that it could be more, on an individual farmer basis. In fact we would like to make it more. However, when one considers that \$580 million is going into circulation at the beginning of the planting season, it will be of significant benefit to western Canadians in putting their crop in the ground this spring.

## DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS OPTION

**Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, in his discussions with these organizations now and in the future, will the Minister make deficiency payments for low prices that we expect for grain one of the options for dealing with the crisis?

**Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)):** Mr. Speaker, it is true that the amount of money that was announced yesterday under the Western Grain Stabilization Act is for the present crop year. We have yet to plant and harvest the crop for which initial prices were announced a week ago. I do not believe we want to get totally ahead of ourselves.

The amount of money that could potentially come from the Western Grain Stabilization Act next year could be substantial. Again we would like to point out that it was this Government—and we should give some credit to both opposition Parties—that amended the Act to allow for this kind of funding to be available when it is most needed by prairie farmers, that is, prior to spring seeding.

I might add that we hope to have those cheques in the mail as early as Friday, and by the end of next week at the very latest. It will be well before May 1.

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## MULTICULTURALISM

## TORONTO CONFERENCE—PROGRAM FUNDING

**Mr. Bill Attewell (Don Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Multiculturalism. At the conference in Toronto last Saturday, concern was expressed by members of some ethno-cultural organizations that the new initiatives being taken in multiculturalism and business will draw resources away from some good programs existing in Multiculturalism Canada. Will the Minister tell the House whether these concerns are justified?

**Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Minister of State (Multiculturalism)):** Mr. Speaker, indeed the conference was a smashing success. It resulted in many positive recommendations, new thrusts and new opportunities which came forward from the delegates who represented all parts and all regions of the country.

I can assure the Hon. Member that none of these new opportunities or new thrusts which we are in the process of discussing with the ethno-cultural community will take anything away from the very positive existing programs. Rather, they will complement our commitment to provide equality of opportunity to all Canadians in all areas of the economy and Canada as a whole.

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[Translation]

## OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

## MINORITIES—REQUEST FOR ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Today, we received the Fifteenth Report of the Commissioner of Official Languages, and there are a number of serious problems with official languages policies and programs, both with respect to the provision of services and the policies of this Government.

The situation of official language minority groups is a critical and disastrous one. Are you prepared to ask today for a Royal Commission of Inquiry that will examine this whole subject with a view to providing quick and effective solutions to the problems we are having at the provincial level?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** I assume my hon. friend is referring to the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages. Of course. Last year, Mr. Speaker, upon receiving the report, I set up a committee of Senior Deputy Ministers to deal with this problem and to outline an action program that would promote the development and expansion of Canada's two official languages and their use on a daily basis. I am pleased to inform the Hon. Member that the committee has submitted a report. We are now at the ministerial level, and I think that in the near future, the Government will be in a position to make some important announcements with respect to this second facet, if you wish, of an action program to promote official languages.

## FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' RIGHT TO WORK IN FRENCH OR ENGLISH—UPPER MANAGEMENT—MEASURES GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO TAKE

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, considering the right of federal public servants to carry on their daily work either in French or in English, and considering that the Commissioner of Official Languages has criticized the Prime Minister's Office, levelling rather severe criticism at his senior Staff—the Commissioner says that ten out of eleven