

*Wheat Acreage Reduction*

years ago. As yet the House of Commons has not been given the details of this plan. Some months ago the *Financial Post* and other publications were able to obtain some information on this matter, but the members of the House and the farmers have not been able to obtain any detailed information on it. There have been indications and suggestions that it would be tabled in the House and that a bill would be introduced, but we still have not seen it.

Within the framework of the plan announced by the government there are, of course, a number of very important questions. I was pleased to hear one statement made by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) in which he indicated that the government would be prepared to take a look at some of the details of the plan as it was announced, in order to try to remove some inequities which might arise. I certainly hope this is done, because I think it is badly needed.

One of the questions that comes to my mind concerns consultation with other nations. I note that in his statement the Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Lang) made reference to the fact that he is proposing a meeting with the governments of Australia, Argentina, the U.S.A. and the Commission of the European Economic Community at the ministerial level to review the Canadian program and consider complementary action by others designed to compound its benefits internationally. It seems to me that is no way to carry on international negotiations and international affairs. First of all you give away everything that you have to bargain with, and then you see what the other fellow is going to do. This is a rather poor application of negotiating principles.

Reference has already been made to the problems created for the farmer who in fact adjusted his production last year. I urge the minister to take a look at this matter and to make adjustments in the program. I can give him examples, perhaps not quite as severe as the one referred to by another member earlier this evening, but of a farmer in the minister's constituency with whom he is well acquainted, I believe, and who has 680 acres of cultivated land. In 1968 he had 320 acres of wheat under production; last year he reduced it to 120 acres of wheat. Plans for the coming year involved some 150 acres of wheat, and he planned to increase his summer fallow acreage. On the basis of the plan announced, he would be left out in the cold.

This is not a proper application of the plan. In fact, I think there are other considerations as well. What about the farmer who maintains an acreage of registered seed? How is he affected if he maintained a reasonable acreage of registered seed, even though he increases his summer fallow acreage? Some consideration should be given, not to the person who goes in and out of registered seed but to the farmer who produces registered seed on a regular basis.

What about the situation involving landlord-tenant arrangements? Here I refer to arrangements involving crop shares. There is no problem with respect to cash rentals, at least in terms of the landlord. It is the tenant's problem whether he can find the money or not, but at least there is no problem inherent in the arrangement itself. But where there are crop sharing arrangements, how is the landlord affected? This matter was referred to earlier this evening.

Several references have been made to the problem involved in the incentive that has been given for greater summer fallow production this year. One of the most serious problems has to do with the area of the Prairie provinces wherein they engage basically in two-year cycle patterns of production. Generally, farmers year after year leave one-half of their land in summer fallow. Will these farmers be expected to summer fallow their land two years in a row? The hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Douglas) suggested that basically this was a good program. I think many farmers in his constituency will not consider it to be a good program.

I would also raise a question about the situation of farmers in areas where more summer fallow work is required. It is well known that there are many areas in the Prairies where only two or three summer fallow operations are required in a year, whereas in other areas six or seven operations are required. I think this produces a problem which should be taken into account.

Beyond that I suggest that a legitimate question can be asked whether in fact it is reasonable to ask any farmer to take more than a certain percentage of his land out of production under this crash program. I think it is very unreasonable to suggest this, if that man is expected to continue farming in the future.

Questions were asked earlier today about forage seed prices and the possible pressure on prices that will come about as a result of