

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that an even more important question for the minister to consider is this. If the government is going to drop, as it has indicated it intends to do, the wool deficiency payment program, what does it propose to do to assure the survival of the Canadian wool producing industry? In my constituency there are scores of small farmers who raise sheep. They are on land that has little value for any other form of agriculture. They do not make a big living but they make a bare living by working hard.

If they are driven off these small farms and go into the towns and onto welfare, it is certainly not going to improve the situation in this country. From the standpoint of the well-being of Canada we are much better to keep sheep farmers on their small holdings continuing to produce lamb and wool.

It will be argued that the deficiency payment program cost the government some money. I am prepared to give the minister instances of industrial incentive projects in this country which cost the government more than the entire wool deficiency payment program. There is no doubt that that program would provide a great deal more employment than some of the industrial incentive projects which could be named.

The members of the House of Commons and the sheep producers of this country are entitled to a clear explanation of two points. First, why the government is not prepared to reinstate the wool deficiency payment program. Second, if they are adamant and will not reinstate the program, the minister has a responsibility to tell the House and the sheep farmers of this country what he proposes to do to ensure the survival of our sheep industry.

**Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, it is true that wool prices in Canada and, indeed, world wool prices are unsatisfactory for producers. There is no argument about that. However, I must point out to the hon. member that in spite of the fact the government has paid out a wool subsidy on a support program for many, many years, amounting to over \$12 million, during that period there has been a very significant drop in the sheep population of Canada. Therefore it is very difficult to argue that the wool subsidy support program that has been in effect for the past 12 or 14 years has maintained the sheep industry, when in fact the sheep population has dropped during the past 12 years from 1,600,000 to about 900,000 today.

**Mr. Douglas:** There was a 9 per cent increase last year.

**Mr. Olson:** Yes, and there is good reason for that. It is because the price of lamb, which is also part of the sheep production industry, is significantly higher than it was two, five or eight years ago. Indeed, at the present time the price of lamb is running at nearly an all-time high in Canadian history.

On balance, the total returns from the sheep industry, taking into account the increased price of lamb and the price of wool, are probably higher than they have been

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for a long time. The main reason is that when there is an increased interest in sheep production it should be set up on a basis that makes economic sense. The sensible economic factor is to produce sheep for the purpose of selling meat, which is lamb which is selling on the Canadian market at a very satisfactory price.

I think it would be a disservice to farmers if at this or any other juncture we were to provide an incentive for people to go into production of any kind, particularly sheep production, on the basis of a market that has been declining for 20 years and does not appear to be increasing. Therefore, the capitalization that goes into the production of sheep ought to be done on a realistic basis and that basis is in fact on a very substantially increased price for lamb. By the way, Mr. Speaker, we are still only producing 25 per cent of the lamb that Canadians eat, so there is a good market for it. Over the past two or three years, Canadian housewives have demonstrated that they are willing to pay a premium for Canadian lamb.

#### YOUTH—LACK OF HOSTELS IN MONTREAL

**Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants):** Mr. Speaker, youth today is nomadic. We cannot turn that fact back, any more than midis can turn themselves back into minis, or Canute can turn back the tide. The other day I asked a question of the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) about the lack of youth hostels across Canada. There was no reply from anybody on the government side and that brings me here this evening.

• (10:20 p.m.)

I will start and end with a series of press clippings. I think it is an important subject. There is no avoiding the fact that youth does roam about Canada today and that government in some way should be prepared for this. First, I will start away back with the *Globe and Mail* of March 5, 1971. A proposed 2½-day conference on transient youth, under the auspices of the Canadian Council of Social Development, was cancelled because of lack of federal government support. The report said: "The council was also angry because the government in addition to not financing the meeting refused to send representatives." The writing was on the wall.

Second, I will quote from the *Montreal Star* dealing with an 18-year old named Lee Fry from British Columbia who was not surprised that the Carleton hostel was not quite ready. In six days of hitch-hiking across the country he heard there were good hostels in three cities—Regina, Winnipeg and Thunder Bay—but he did not stay in any of them. Instead, he slept in an apartment in Edmonton, under a park bench in North Battleford, in the open air near Kenora and in camp grounds in White River and Renfrew.

My third clipping is from the *Ottawa Citizen* of June 1, 1971. The Hull armoury, a major stopping point last summer, will not open this year. My fourth clipping is from Southam News Services:

The transient youth program costing \$1,153,000 is a small part of the summer '71 program which has a total price tag of \$67.8 million.