

the efficiency of the Canadian farmer has been demonstrated. Since world war II, the increase in productivity with respect to agricultural products has been almost twice as high as the increase shown by all other sectors of the Canadian economy. Unfortunately, the benefit of a large part of this increased productivity has been passed on to others; some say to the middle man, others to the consumer. It is certain that the primary producer has not received the benefit of all that increase in productive efficiency during these past few years. There are some additional steps that we ought to take for the purpose of claiming for the primary producer some of the results of this increase in efficiency. An important element in this is the need for farmers to have greater influence and input with respect to marketing arrangements for farm products.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Olson: We have proposed a bill to parliament that would set up a structure under which that could be done. We believe that it is essential for us to proceed with provisions for marketing arrangements that will be acceptable to the producer and that will also be in concert with the wishes of provincial governments which have some jurisdiction in this field. I cannot predict this afternoon how soon we may reach the position in which farmers themselves will become more directly involved in the marketing of their products. All I can do is repeat what we have done and express my hope that this goal will be achieved soon.

May I say this, too. Simply passing the marketing legislation that is before Parliament now will not solve the whole problem. The legislation will merely provide the legal framework on which we can negotiate with the provinces and with producer representatives in order to find a way that will increase the farmer's influence and, hopefully, the return to the producer as a result of that action. I hope that we can proceed on this matter. I repeat what I have said many times across the country: In my opinion, since our farmers are now possessed of the advanced production technology I have referred to, the greatest return to the producer and the best way to enhance his position is through the establishment of marketing techniques as opposed to other methods. Government subsidies, transfers out of the treasury and that sort of thing ought to be used from time to time for helping the producers of a particular commodity over some rough spots in the marketing of their products. No member of the House sincerely believes that that course is a panacea that will help agriculture over a long period of time.

A great deal has been said this afternoon about the small farms adjustment program that we have been negotiating with the provinces for some time. I think it would be useful for me to say a few words about that program so that there is no misunderstanding in the minds of hon. members or of farmers who may be affected by this program as to what is being proposed. In the first place, Mr. Speaker, may I say what this program is not. May I talk about its negative aspects first. First, this program is not designed to force any farmers into accept-

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ing the options that are being made available under the program. The farmer will make his own choice. If you look at the history of small farm units and the degree of attrition that has taken place with respect to the total number of farm units—most of the units involved are small farm units—I think you will agree that this attrition has been brought about as a result of advancing production technology and efficacy. These trends will probably continue.

The farmer, no more than any other worker in our society, likes to be in the position of not using his talents and his time to full advantage. He does not like to use 50 per cent, 40 per cent or 30 per cent of his capability. All people like to use their full time and their full talents and energies in the occupation in which they are engaged. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we must recognize that fewer and fewer people will be required to produce the total food requirements for our domestic use and for those markets available to us in the international field. So, we have come up with a small farms adjustment policy or program that offers three options to farmers who will qualify. When I talk about qualifying, I am sure hon. members will expect us to start at the bottom end of the scale and take those farmers in greatest difficulty, with the smallest units in relation to the size of economic units needed for the production of the particular commodity they raise. We should begin there and work up through the system as rapidly as funds will permit and as quickly as farmers wish to participate in that program.

We have suggested, therefore, that we start with farm units with a value of \$20,000 or less. On a unit of that size, Mr. Speaker, we do not believe a man and his family can make a living or sufficient income to provide a decent living. The three options we are offering are these: first, for the particular farmer in that position who is either near or at retirement age, there is a program that we are suggesting under which he could make use of the assets he has acquired in this farm unit plus some subsidy. These, put together, would form a retirement package that would allow him to withdraw from agricultural production with some dignity and security. That is one option. The second option we are offering under the program—

Mr. Lewis: How much a month would he get?

Mr. Olson: That would depend on the amount of his assets plus the subsidy. I could go into some of those details, although there is not time for that now. I am prepared to send my hon. friend the 20 or 22 page explanation of what is involved in that program.

Mr. Lewis: I have read it and the monthly payment is pretty low.

Mr. Olson: The second option that we are offering to those farmers who are younger,—

Mr. Lewis: It is about \$100 a month.

Mr. Olson: —and whose farm units are also too small to produce a reasonable return for themselves and their