

occasions, be it from Premier Getty as well as the Member from Edmonton—Strathcona, or from Members of the Opposition in the Alberta Legislature, just how serious the situation is in Alberta and the concern, as they see it, at the lack of action on the part of the Government. Since some months ago the Deputy Prime Minister announced the Western Economic Diversification Strategy, will he indicate whether or not the office has now been established and set up in Alberta, and if not when it will be and when we will actually have a copy of the strategy to see what the Government has in mind to diversify the economy of western Canada?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, a number of steps have already been taken. The recent announcement with respect to the development and exploration incentives for the energy industry which was announced by my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, was certainly pointed in that direction. The framework is still being worked on through the consultative process. No offices have been set up. The comprehensive strategy will be announced in due course, I hope within the next month or so.

QUERY CONCERNING POSSIBLE OFFICE IN WINNIPEG

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister will know that the Canadian Petroleum Association just mentioned yesterday that the incentives provided by the Government will not do much good at least this year but perhaps next year.

I have in my hand a list of all of the individuals, their positions, their room numbers and phone numbers for the Western Diversification Office in Winnipeg. Will the Deputy Prime Minister tell me whether there is an office in Winnipeg? Also, when the office is established in Alberta, will he commit himself to ensure that it is not simply a regurgitation of existing moneys, programs, and personnel?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I was always under the impression that the New Democratic Party was the great proponent and supporter of the little guy. I am surprised that the member was quoting from the Canadian Petroleum Association.

Mr. Riis: You might listen to them.

Mr. Mazankowski: I would invite the member to read the supportive letters from IPAC, CPAC and the little guys out there who have been hurt very badly as a result of the fall-out from the National Energy Program which the New Democrats were a part of with the Liberals when the Liberals were in government.

In so far as the names and addresses are concerned, that is old information the member got from his colleague from Yorkton—Melville.

Mr. Riis: You denied it.

Oral Questions

Mr. Mazankowski: That is old information. I would suggest the Member for Kamloops—Shuswap go back to his research department and have it updated.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Algoma has the floor.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

WHEAT—REQUEST FOR DEFICIENCY PAYMENT COMMITMENT

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. This week President Reagan reaffirmed United States policy to lower the world price for grain while at the same time guaranteeing U.S. farmers \$6 a bushel for their wheat. Canadian farmers are looking at a 20 per cent reduction, which is around \$250 a bushel. When the Government announces its initial price for wheat this month, will it at the same time give a commitment to a deficiency payment so that our farmers will not be put off the land this year?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member should know that we have provided a record amount of financial support to the Canadian grain industry. In fact, if one includes what has already been paid and will be paid to the grain and oil seed sector alone, the member will see that last year's income level will not only be maintained but increased slightly.

The Hon. Member is aware as well that we have commenced another series of meetings with farm leaders. The last meeting was held March 5. We will be meeting again with the farm leaders either in the latter part of May or the first part of June to work together and design a new program of support to Canadian farmers.

COSTS OF SEEDING

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, the Minister knows that farmers are looking at record low prices for grain this year, 20 per cent below is what he told farmers at the CFA meeting. With initial prices for wheat in Canada some \$3.50 below that guaranteed in the United States and with no commitment to a deficiency payment, how does the Minister expect farmers to seed a crop? How does he expect them to get the credit and the funding to put in a crop with no commitment for the coming crop year as to a guaranteed price or a deficiency payment to supplement the initial price?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): I think, Mr. Speaker, because of the record of this Government and because of our commitment to work with the farm leadership in the future, that is a fair degree of support. There is a good message and a good understanding; indeed, there is a good