

Government Orders

The OCPA says the program proved to be a major benefit in shifting corn sales from the autumn until later in the marketing year, thereby reducing the extent of export sales in the autumn and shortage-induced imports in later months. While the federal guarantee under a revised APCA would allow groups to borrow money at or slightly below prime, administration charges would mean an effective cost to producers at well above prime, providing no advantage over commercial sources of credit.

We know the pressure for this came from the U.S. and the Fraser Institute and these great think tanks this government relies on for cuts to VIA, for the clawback on pension and family allowance and for the cuts to UI.

Mr. McKnight: You are ad libbing, Jim. Get back to your text.

Mr. Fulton: We are looking forward to hearing from ministers on that side to seriously get up and debate the impact of their proposals.

My friend who was speaking a few moments ago was talking about the skulduggery involved with how this government has handled the whole question regarding yogurt and ice cream. We know how it has bungled and fumbled and misled farmers on that one. We know that that is the piece of wool that could unravel marketing boards in this country. There is not a dairyman in this country who does not know they were misled by the Conservatives during the trade debate and earlier this year.

Mr. McKnight: Wool comes from sheep, not cows.

Mr. Fulton: Those same groups point out there is no offsetting reduction for the 1989-90 crop year in the U.S. loan program, the American equivalent to the APCA for grains and oilseeds.

After conducting a cost benefit summary for the 1986-87 and 1988 crop years, the OCPA calculates benefits to the producer to average, expressed as value increase of \$4.54 and \$36.30 for each tonne respectively, for a total dollar figure of \$2,044,826 and \$16,796,423. At the same time the interest cost to Agriculture Canada was \$1,175,976 in 1986-87 and \$1,121,022 in 1987-88.

The cash advance meant a value increase of \$8.79 and \$60.73 a tonne for soybean producers in these two crop years, or a value of \$1,523,932 and \$10,716,590 respectively. It cost the government \$759,817 and \$773,050.

Users of the APCA and major farm groups want the current interest free program to be extended for this crop year with discussions held to determine the impact of changes on the farm community. Many producers had planned their finances with the assumption that the money would be available and they had been left in the lurch. This is something the government members do not really want to talk about. I am glad to see the Minister responsible for Grains and Oilseeds here now. Perhaps he can respond to what was going on at the convention regarding Mr. Cole. He is from Charlie's own executive in his constituency. He said:

I told Charlie last week to his face, you have two chances for re-election: slim and none.

We will be looking forward to hearing how he is going to respond to that one.

Mr. McKnight: That is what you said about the government in 1988, Fulton.

Mr. Fulton: We will see. My vote went up.

Users of the APCA and major farm groups want the current interest free program to be extended for this crop year. Many of them, as I said a moment ago, have been left in a lurch.

Horticultural groups say the changes will force vegetable producers to market their crops early in the season when prices are low. Putting all this product on the market will force prices even lower. *Union des producteurs agricoles* suggests that these low prices will trigger stabilization payments which could get producers in countervailing difficulty with the U.S.

Well, what about consumers? Let us think about it for a moment. It is great for a short burst to get a real good buy on some tomatoes or cucumbers or turnips or potatoes or whatever, but the government does not seem to have thought very carefully through what that means to the producer. What does it mean to the producer? This will be a great boon, a great boondoggle to California and a lot of the mid-west states which have a much longer growing season.

Once again, we can see where all this came from: the trade debate. The government side never wanted to talk about the reality of our geography and our climate, but limiting the period within which farmers can sell their produce does only one thing, it drives down the price and it makes farms less viable. It is a very simple fact that the Conservatives seem incapable of understanding.