

Supply—Agriculture

be made on an acreage basis so that every farmer will benefit. The \$40 million proposed in the estimates will be of assistance to the western grain growers who have been labouring hard under the price squeeze in which they have found themselves over the last few years. One must be a grain grower to know what it means to produce under such a cost of production. Taking into consideration the so-called price squeeze that has been with us for a long time, without any attempt having been made in the past to prevent it or cope with it, this payment cannot be expected to rectify all the evils of the past. However, it is reasonable to assume that the \$40 million proposed as payment for one year will have an effect on western agriculture and will alleviate some of the hardships experienced in the past. Indeed, it will go much further than the agricultural policy that we heard so much about last winter, namely the ten cent increase in the initial price which money in the first place belongs to the farmer.

Had steps been undertaken in the past or even as late as 1955 when it was apparent then as it is now that the price the farmer was receiving for his produce was away out of line proportionately with the prices he had to pay, the situation would not have been as grim as it is now. Consequently the effect of this payment at the present time would have been much more beneficial as the need would not have been as great as it is now.

With the way the situation is now it will be expected that the forthcoming payment should correct all the shortcomings of past years but it must be admitted this is almost impossible without putting too big a burden on the treasury in one year. The part I like most about the action taken, and I know it is appreciated by many farmers, is the fact that this is only one part of a long range program for Canadian agriculture. As stated by the Prime Minister, under this policy, among other benefits, the farmer will find protection from such hazards as drought, frost and crop failures of various kinds.

This is a policy which has been advocated over the years by farm organizations and authorities on agriculture. If it is implemented it is hoped it will put agriculture on a sounder economic basis. In my opinion this program will go a long way towards achieving the ultimate goal, namely to give the farmer a fair return for his investment and labour and to place him in the same position as other segments of our nation by giving him a fair return for his investment and labour.

I would be failing in my duty if in connection with this estimate I did not mention the agricultural amendments implemented during this session, namely

P.F.A.A. cash advances and others. All these acts were amended to meet changing conditions in agriculture and I know that if changes should be necessary in the future in connection with what we are now discussing they will be forthcoming.

Finally, I should like to say that I am pleased that this estimate has been brought in at this time. If it had been introduced last winter or before March 31 it would have been classified as just election bait but now it will serve as a clear indication that the government is concerned with the welfare of all sections of our country. On behalf of the western grain growers and myself I should like to ask the house to approve the estimate before us to provide for payments to western grain producers in accordance with the regulations of the governor in council.

Mr. Carter: Mr. Chairman, in replying to the Prime Minister's announcement of this policy a few days ago our leader had this to say, as found on page 4348 of *Hansard* for August 30:

I am thinking particularly at this moment of the fisherman who has also had his hard times, and who perhaps will look with a certain amount of envy to this kind of action taken by the government for the grain producers.

Naturally, Mr. Chairman, we do not object to this legislation but, as has been pointed out, our fishermen can suffer from the failure of the fisheries just as farmers suffer from the failure of crops. My purpose in rising at this time is to call to the minister's attention the fact that the fishery has failed this year in many parts of Newfoundland, and we hope that the same consideration and assistance will be given to the fishermen as is being given to the farmers under this legislation.

Mr. Pascoe: Mr. Chairman, as a western farmer I had intended to take part in the discussion of this supplementary payment of \$40 million to the prairie grain producers. No statement is necessary from me now. I want to thank the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture for answering opposition statements so fully. The statements of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture will be very carefully studied by prairie farmers and I suggest that they will be well received when considered in relation to the government's long range agricultural policy.

There is one important aspect of the government's farm policy that I should like to emphasize for a moment because it is a part of the long range program. I refer to the farm cost survey on the prairies late this fall. I want to congratulate the Minister of Trade and Commerce on his announcement of July 19 of this farm cost survey. On July 19, as