

*Grain Prices*

other countries that have demonstrated they cannot produce enough foodstuffs to feed themselves.

This brings me to another point, Mr. Speaker. I think a major part of our foreign aid program should be aimed at helping Third World countries become self-sufficient in food production.

● (1640)

In many of our foreign aid projects we have in the past concentrated through CIDA on the giant dams and mega projects of an industrial nature. We are supporting now the United Nations Industrial Development Organization as one of our multilateral agencies which is aimed at industrializing the Third World. But is this really our first priority? Should this be the first priority when two-thirds of the people in this world do not get adequate food?

The hon. member for Yorkton-Melville has bemoaned the fact that children eat candy and drink coke here in Canada. I agree this is a problem. But there is a far greater problem which faces us as citizens in this world, and that is the number of people who are starving. So the great thrust of our program, along with the spirit which the hon. member has proposed in his bill is that of helping other nations with their food needs. Certainly exporting food is a good idea. But let us remember the adage of foreign aid: if you give a person a fish he will eat for a day. If you teach him how to fish, he will eat for a lifetime. That should be one of our fundamental premises when we come to deal with this aspect of helping to increase our exports.

What has happened in this motion I perceive is that we are setting a floor price. What will happen to the supply of these products when we set a floor price but do not set any type of marketing agency over the supply which will regulate it? Are we going to get into the quota problem? Do we want more and more government regulations, as the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville has indicated? Is that the intent of the hon. member who has proposed this bill? Are we going to need more and more instrumentality to deal with this type of problem? I am not sure exactly what he has in mind in that area.

We heard a suggestion today from a member opposite in which he praised a two-price system for wheat. In a debate on a previous bill this afternoon we heard another member opposite condemning the two-price system for wheat. We heard a strong condemnation of the two-price system for oil. We have heard a lot of talk about the areas which deal with whether Canadians will act for their own benefit in a mutually co-operative way. These are questions which are fundamental to our existence as a nation, to our existence as a country, Madam Speaker.

I do not want to prejudge the answer, but I believe we will all have to take a look at the community of interest we have as Canadians working together. Rather than concentrating on petty differences, we will have to take a spirit of open mindedness. Rather than focusing on the problems, why do we not look at the tremendous potential that we have as a nation, a

nation blessed with the richest resources and with the most highly educated people, with evidence of human rights and freedoms, and with good neighbours in most sections of the world? Why do we not take these great strengths, this potential that we have, and look on the bright side of things, rather than focusing on the petty and narrow differences which are separating us? That is why I disapprove.

In conclusion, let me add the philosophy of this motion. Perhaps setting a minimum price is one way to help the farmers. My parents are farmers. They had to flee Saskatchewan when the droughts of the depression wiped them out. My parents are now farmers here in Ontario. I am looking forward to the recess this weekend so that I can go to our farm and help get in our first crop of hay. We are fortunate that it is not a bad crop this year in Ontario. I wish the crops were as good every place in Canada.

In setting a floor price perhaps this motion does not take into consideration that pioneering philosophy, that free enterprise philosophy of a lot of our farmers. Our farmers are some of the most enterprising, hard working people that we have ever seen. These are the people, the farmers, who get up at any time of the night when a calf is being born. They anticipate it, they go out and work with the cow to make sure that the calf is born and is healthy. These are the people who are in the fields just as soon as the weather permits in the spring. These people invest in tiles and their drains so they can get into the fields sooner and get their crops off sooner. These are the people who are investing great amounts in the mechanics of farming, in the new technologies in order that they can be more productive farmers.

Sure, we can bemoan the fact that there are fewer and fewer farmers in the west today and that the average size of the farm in the west is now 800 acres. Maybe this does cause disruptions in the life of people in the west. Yes, people are fleeing from the farms. But this is one of the unfortunate realities that efficiency and modernization have brought upon us. With mechanization we have been able to produce more and more. I do not think any of us bemoan the fact that a farmer can produce a lot more now because he has a tractor than during the time when he had a horse and before that when he had to use very simple hand implements in order to till his land.

Yes, there is a disruption of life to the farmer and there is a consolidation of land. But do any of us bemoan the new technologies that have made the individual farmer more productive? It is this productivity, it is utilizing these modern techniques, it is being a free enterpriser and taking risks, and these are the things that farmers have always been prepared to do. They are some of the strongest people in society in terms of the free enterprise spirit. This does not mean that we want to ignore the aspect of the government co-operating with our farmers. But before we start to guarantee everything, before we look at a guaranteed minimum price based on cost for wheat and for oil seeds, before we start to extend that to hog producers, to dairy farmers, to cattle farmers, to all producers of agricultural products here in Canada, I think we have to look at the implications of this from a financial point of view