

Members opposite commented on the feed grains policy. We spent a great deal of time studying and developing our feed grains policy. Rather than ad hocking the program, we put the proposal before the farmers for further discussion for a period ending August 1 next year.

I am glad the hon. member for Lisgar (Mr. Murta) recognized the merit of the long-term proposals we have put forward in letting the market determine the prices. However, I was somewhat amazed that the spokesmen for the Conservative party today were not quite clear about the fact that supply and demand are an important factor in our economy and that controls are dangerous and difficult because they interfere with ordinary production development. Therefore they think we should not interfere with pricing. I wish they would talk to their own economic critics who do not understand that if you put on controls you have trouble with production in one way or another.

The hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Gleave) talked about feed grains. He referred to the matter of whether feed grains would be a low price or high price policy. The point that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) and I have been making from one end of the country to another is that the purpose is to have a similar base for prices across the country. None of my colleagues from Quebec has ever argued we should pay low prices to grain farmers in the Prairies. They have said that people who produce animals in all parts of this country should have access to that grain on a similar cost plus basis. The fact is we do not have low prices.

The hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar did not refer to the price at which feed wheat was selling before the new policy was announced. I wonder why he did not do that. He quoted the new policy feed wheat price of \$3.41 5/8. The price the Wheat Board was charging is at Thunder Bay for domestic purposes before the new policy was in the area of \$3.16 3/8, a good deal less than under the new policy.

There is a similarity in the case of barley. It was \$2.23 before the price was announced and \$2.20½ thereafter. Those prices are on the average, even at the current competitive level. This faces us with a real challenge in this country, one which the Minister of Agriculture will be dealing with in his usual effective fashion.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lang: At the moment, feed grain prices in Canada are very high. With the consumer resistance, which is promoted by most of the spokesmen for the Official Opposition, the man who produces meat is being squeezed between the Tory food critics on the one hand and the price of feed grain on the other.

I do not apologize for the fact that the price of feed grain is high. This at least means that the feed grain producers are making up for the very poor return per hour of work they received under long-term past policies in this country. Step by step this government has been doing something about the income position of our farmers with programs on the selling side, programs on the transportation side and programs of information to help the farmer make

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the decision that is right for Canada and right for him as well. That is the state of affairs in agriculture in this country.

We will not rest. We have a list of programs, from stabilization in the area of meat to grain marketing insurance in the area of grains to ensure that the farmer's life in this country will continue to improve. It will improve as long as this government can in fact put into place policies which do things and are good for agriculture in this country.

Mr. Mazankowski: I wonder whether I might be permitted to ask the minister a question. He dwelt to some extent on the problem of the final payment for the last crop year and the current crop year. Is the minister in a position at this time to indicate when the final payment will be made and whether the amount the farmers will be receiving has been calculated?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, The Wheat Board has now submitted to us the final figures with regard to the payments on wheat, barley and oats. The order in council to authorize those payments is in the process of being prepared and submitted. I could note that the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) predicted three or four months ago they would be between 20 and 25 cents. In the case of wheat, I can tell hon. members it will be approximately double that amount. In the case of wheat it will be well over 40 cents. There will be similar high figures for other grains. Rather than give the precise figures, simply let me state the global figure. The final payments on wheat, oats and barley combined in the prairie provinces will come to a total of \$374.6 million. I expect that the cheques will be mailed in early November.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Horner (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The time allotted to the minister has expired. The answer to the question went a little over the time allotted. I do not think I should permit further questions without agreement by the House.

Mr. Horner (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. In answering the question of the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski), the minister suggested I had said the final figure would be in the neighbourhood of 25 to 30 cents. I said the initial payment should be increased by 25 to 30 cents because anyone who delivered wheat in the month of July lost far more than that. Last June I said it should be increased by 25 to 30 cents. The farmers would not have lost as much money. However, the minister has no heart for the poor farmers.

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, I did refer to the pages in *Hansard* which contained the hon. member's speech. I hope hon. members will look at it. It seems he did in fact indicate 20 to 25 cents. It is even more important that he is now somehow trying to give the wrong impression, that the initial price is the relevant figure. Clearly, he should know it is the final price that is important. The crucial thing is the initial payment plus the final payment from