

Agricultural Policies

tural industry would not be able to dispose of the production it produces. We would destroy their industry and reverse the process of trying to help the developing countries sustain their own economies. There are other limitations. The very effective aid programs in the world in the past decade or two have produced some remarkable developments such as in the productivity of wheat and rice.

I am sure members of the House are familiar with these developments which have been made in many countries, which have helped them become completely self-sufficient in respect of the food they require. Yet we still hear sanctimonious statements such as those made by members of the New Democratic Party. They suggest that surely we can find someone who will dispose of our surplus food. They would seem to suggest that all we need do is find someone to take it and then find enough taxpayers in Canada to put up the hundreds of millions of dollars required to do it.

So I suggest to the members of the New Democratic Party who proposed this motion today and to other opposition members that it would be more reasonable to face the facts as they exist. These facts are that the population required to produce the necessary food in Canada is declining. So I say, let us turn the people into productive employment in other areas of our economy. Many jobs will be required in western Canada and in agricultural areas to absorb the rural population and the people who will be shifted out of the agricultural industry. Let us do something about this. Perhaps we should have looked at the \$100 million we gave in the form of an emergency payment to the grain growing industry on the Prairies. Perhaps we should have decided to put this money into a long-term program to develop employment for these people so that instead of giving them a relief program for one year we would be giving them a program that would have long-term benefits in respect of employment year after year.

• (4:20 p.m.)

This is the area in which we must strive. There are good things that can be said about agricultural development in Canada and that need to be said. It is not just a matter of decline. We all know that the livestock industry is growing very rapidly and will need to grow if it is going to keep up with demand. We all know that the oilseed industry is growing very rapidly, and we will need all

that production. But there is increased competition from abroad. The socialist states are beginning to become a little more productive in their economies and they will be more competitive with us. They will require less of our products. We are going to face increased subsidization of agriculture in some intensive manufacturing countries of Europe and elsewhere.

Let us face these problems realistically. Let us hear some constructive suggestions from across the way. Let us hear the ideas which the opposition has on how to tackle these problems, instead of hearing their condemnations and suggestions that all we should do is go in reverse. I hope that in the weeks ahead and in the session next fall we will not be treated day after day to cries of lament from the opposition who refuse to face the facts of life and refuse to face the economy as it exists today. I hope that we will hear some progressive and helpful suggestions from them. I sit on the Standing Committee on Agriculture, and I also listen to them in this House, but I seldom hear any such suggestions. I hope that in the months ahead we will have something along that line that will aid the people of Canada and especially the farmers of this country.

Mr. John Burton (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, I think it is very timely that the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Gleave) introduced this motion today because it covers a number of very important matters that affect the future of rural Canada. In the first place, the hon. member made reference in his motion to the fact that there are policies which are depressing the agricultural economy of this country. In the second place, he made reference to the economic impact of the situation facing the agricultural industry on other sectors of the economy as well as the total economy of Canada. He made reference to the fact that this is causing excessive unemployment, lack of income, slow economic growth and little hope for the future. Finally, he went on to urge the government to take positive measures to ensure the survival of a dynamic rural community as an essential component of Canadian society.

I was really quite amazed by the contributions made by the two ministers in the debate this afternoon. First of all, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) trotted out the same speech that he has made on I do not know how many occasions in the House. It is the same tired, old record about the things that