

Mr. Foster: Mr. Speaker, one of the Tory Members called those honest, hard-working farmers "quitters". They are certainly not quitters. They are being destroyed by the Government.

REQUEST FOR GUARANTEED LINES OF CREDIT

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, the Minister has written to the head of the Bankers' Association asking the bankers to provide credit. Clearly the banks and credit unions are not able to provide credit to these producers because they know that their businesses are going to be destroyed.

Will the Government give guarantees to those banking institutions and credit unions for a line of credit so that these producers can continue to operate their farms and vineyards? Surely that is the least it can do if it is not prepared to come forward with a direct compensation program immediately.

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Hon. Member's interest in the subject but he must realize that you cannot just snap your fingers and come forth with a fair and equitable adjustment package. He must also realize that there will have to be negotiations with the provinces as far as the cost-sharing aspect of the package is concerned.

I wonder whether the Hon. Member has forgotten where this problem started. The problem with GATT really started with provincially established trade barriers and provincial pricing mechanisms which the provinces signalled to our GATT partners at the last round of GATT that they were going to move away from. Of course they did not move away from them, and that is the basis for the difficulty in which the wine and grape industry finds itself today.

BRITISH COLUMBIA GRAPE GROWER

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Agriculture. Many British Columbians were disturbed to learn, in writing, that Fred Somer was going to lose his home and his vineyard in British Columbia as a result of the Mulroney-Reagan deal. That was made very precise and very specific in the letter to him from the financial institution.

What precise steps is the Minister of Agriculture going to take today, this being the time of year that grape growers go to get their loans? What steps is the Minister of Agriculture going to take?

The Government can find \$500 million for the Reichmanns to buy Husky Oil. What is it going to do to help the grape growers in Canada?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the Hon. Member has no appreciation or understanding of the difficulty involved in putting an adjustment package of this kind together in such a way that it contains the components of fairness and equity.

Oral Questions

The farmer in question is quoted in the *Vancouver Province*:

"People took risks to grow grapes" said the 61-year-old farmer. "The bureaucracy must take its time on this."

We have moved expeditiously, but we are going to take the time to get the program right so that it is fair and equitable to all producers.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, I meant to say Gulf when I said Husky a moment ago.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): That was only one of the errors. Tell the whole truth.

Mr. Fulton: Perhaps the Secretary of State for External Affairs could take a breath of air. It would double his IQ.

Mr. Foster: He needs more than oxygen.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps all Hon. Members would notice the time and put their questions briefly.

LOANS SOUGHT BY GRAPE GROWERS

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. Brian Nash, the Chairman of the Ontario Grape Growers Marketing Board, said that he was not surprised to hear about the woes of Fred Somer, but that in fact the problem is three times as bad in Ontario as it is in B.C.

Grape growers in Ontario and in British Columbia, particularly in the Niagara region and in the central interior of B.C., would like to know what steps the Government is going to take now. In March, April, and May the grape growers go to get their loans. What steps is the Minister of Agriculture proposing as they go to financial institutions to get loans to get the grapes growing on the vines again?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, as a result of the meeting that we had on December 4 certain commitments were given. I had the opportunity to communicate our feelings on behalf of the grape industry to the Bankers' Association. In most cases most of the financial institutions have been quite responsible. However, we have encountered some individual cases and we are obviously making representations on their behalf.

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AGRICULTURE

DROUGHT IN SOUTHERN SASKATCHEWAN AND ALBERTA

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture who will know that the southern areas of Saskatchewan and Alberta are experiencing the second driest winter and spring in 102 years. This has resulted in soil erosion, and at least one community is already trucking in water. However, the