

*Private Members' Business*

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of introducing measures to amend the Western Grain Stabilization Act to include coverage for producers who feed their own grain to their livestock;

and on the amendment of Mr. Funk (p.4792).

**Mrs. Louise Feltham (Wild Rose):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to enter into this debate. Stabilization for farm-fed grain is an important issue for farmers in many regions of this country.

Farmers who market their grain through recognized purchasing establishments receive income protection through the Western Grain Stabilization Program and the Agricultural Stabilization Act. Farmers who grow grain to feed to livestock receive assistance and specific consideration related to the value of feed grain indirectly through livestock stabilization programs.

In addition, Canadian grain farmers have received considerable support from the federal government in recent years to help them through particularly difficult periods of depressed grain prices.

The last decade was not an easy one for Canadian grain and oilseed farmers. During the mid-1980s, grain prices hit lows that could not be foreseen during the boom times of the previous decade.

The international trading arena became a nightmare for Canadian farmers. The largest grain exporters, the United States and the European Community, battled to get a larger piece of the grain market pie. They drove world prices down through the use of export subsidies.

At the same time, widespread drought in 1988 plagued both the prairies and regions of eastern Canada. Farmers had to cope with shrivelling crops and low prices all at once.

Throughout these difficult times, the federal government rallied to the aid of Canadian farmers to the greatest extent possible. The government's record in support of agriculture in recent years speaks for itself.

In 1986 and again in 1987, the federal government provided financial support to grain farmers through the Special Canadian Grains Program. A total of \$2.1 billion in direct assistance to farmers was provided over those two years.

Assistance through the special grains program was provided for a number of crops. Individualized payments were made on the basis of how much—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** Order, please. Unfortunately I must interrupt the hon. member.

The hon. member spoke on this motion for one minute at one point but was not in the House when it resumed. Hence, she has lost the possibility to speak on it again. I made a mistake in recognizing her today.

Unfortunately I cannot recognize the hon. member again, as she has already spoken on this bill although but for one minute.

**Mr. Althouse:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

When we run into problems such as this often unanimous consent will resolve them. I would be prepared to give my consent to forgo the rules to allow the hon. member to complete her speech. I presume that that same privilege would be granted by the other party.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** If I can have unanimous consent, I would be delighted.

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** I ask the hon. member to forgive me for having interrupted, but I really had no choice.

**Mrs. Feltham:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also thank my colleagues.

The 1987 program also included coverage for summer fallow acreage in western Canada.

The federal government also came to the aid of farmers with the Canadian Crop Drought Assistance Program. This program was developed in response to the drought of 1988 which caused heavy crop damage in many regions of Canada.

In western Canada the 1988 crop totalled just over 31 million tonnes in comparison to a slightly below average 40.7 million in 1989. Farmers who suffered the most severe drought losses in 1988 were assisted through the \$850 million federal drought program, which was applicable to all parts of Canada.

In addition, the federal government improved crop insurance programs to strengthen protection for farmers from similar catastrophes. In 1989, as a result of the