

courageously defend the rights of farmers. I also had the opportunity to sit with him on the agriculture committee and I admired the dedicated and competent work he did to establish a successful farming industry that could guarantee the Canadian people all the food they will need in the future. I can see the hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski) has not shed his convictions. Even as a government member, he now puts before us a most sensible motion, and supports it with the same arguments he used to present when he was in opposition. That is why, Mr. Speaker, when I was listening to him, I was glad to hear him express his concern about the instability of farm income. He is right that revenue is not stable. There are ups and downs.

As recently as last Friday I received the original remittance sent to a farmer in my riding. He delivered \$589.85 worth of milk. He is not a big producer but he is tenacious. He is about 60 years old and he would like to stay on his farm the rest of his life and make enough money to look after his operation and his family. Instead of receiving \$589.85 for his milk, he is asked to pay \$700.51. What a difference it makes when one expects to be paid \$589.85 but gets a bill. There was not even enough to cover the sale. So the cheque is marked "cancelled". No company, no co-operative will finance his feed purchases. It is a disastrous situation and means must absolutely be found to allow any farmer to get enough income to stay in operation.

We wonder why many farmers quit their profession, but there lies the answer. If we, members of Parliament, received at the end of the month a cheque marked "cancelled", I think there would be a great number of motions under Standing Order 43 every day to protest the fact that we are not paid. You cannot pay until you are paid.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is time to come up with a real long-term policy that would enable all farm producers to do a good job. I listened closely earlier to the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) who, quoting from a newspaper, expressed his great concern about the future of this country with respect to food. He is perfectly right. This is a serious matter, a matter that must be dealt with immediately, not only to preserve our farmlands but also to enable those who work them to do so in a generous way so that the people will be well fed.

Mr. Speaker, I would have many other reasons to add but I see time is running short, and I would not want to break my word because I have always felt that, once you give your word, you have to keep it. So, I fully support the motion of the hon. member for Mackenzie, I thank him and congratulate him on having introduced it.

[English]

Mr. Bert Hargrave (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank my hon. friend from the Social Credit party for allowing me a few minutes to finish off the debate. I should like to say, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, that I

Cash Assurance Program

will speak only briefly and in support of the very carefully worded motion put forward by the hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski).

The concept he proposes, or similar concepts, were proposed during the various debates on agricultural stabilization which took place in 1975 and 1976, in particular by members on the government side and proposed by them when they sat in the Thirtieth Parliament in opposition. Some of those members I recall who took part in debates similar to the one of which the hon. member for Mackenzie reminded us tonight were the hon. member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Schellenberger), the hon. member for Swift Current-Maple Creek (Mr. Hamilton), and myself. There is some considerable similarity to various income averaging trust account proposals. One such proposal in some detail, as the hon. member for Mackenzie pointed out, has already been submitted by the Canadian Cattlemen's Association. The hon. member for Wetaskiwin had a private member's hour on this concept during the Thirtieth Parliament and I was pleased to support him at the time. Originally that concept was put forward by the government of Alberta.

I am personally aware of the years of persistent effort the hon. member for Mackenzie has spent on behalf of western agriculture, and of his special concern for northern agriculture. He has done this for many many years. He represents the whole of the northeast corner of Saskatchewan, and his dedication in these matters cannot be questioned. It has now been continuous for 21 years. I have much personal pleasure at this time in urging unanimous support for this private member's motion moved by the hon. member for Mackenzie. On behalf of the government we are prepared to accept the concept he proposes, briefly, that the government should consider the advisability of implementing a cash assurance program which would provide stability of income in agriculture and other food industries, and so on. I would therefore ask that this motion be adopted.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McCain): Shall I call it six o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McCain): It being six o'clock I do now leave the chair until 8 p.m.

At 5.59 p.m. the House took recess.

● (2000)

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.