

of this objection? Mr. Clermont said that when these feed grains are purchased, it is not necessarily for feed for beef herds. It is also for poultry stock and for dairy herds. Is this concern very widespread, then?

(English)

Mr. MOLGAT: Thank you, Mr. Berger. It has been brought to my attention that those who are not next to the table do not benefit from the simultaneous translation, so I will answer this one in English if I may?

Mr. BERGER: Please do so.

Mr. MOLGAT: The question, Mr. Berger, is why are we in the west so concerned about the eastern livestock feed grain agency? Well, I think the real concern, Mr. Berger, is that this agency would reduce the prices we get for the products we sell. Now, if it is clearly understood that it will not benefit from any special prices, if this is merely a distribution agency to benefit eastern feeders, if there is no subsidy attached I personally do not see any major objection to it. I gather from my conversations with a number of you, that there are periods of the year when the prices of feed are very much higher than they should be in your opinion, or there are shortages. If this is a question of more equitable distribution, and if the producers require this and there is no subsidy attached, and there is not going to be a reduction in our prices, then I personally see no major objection to it. But, our concern is that it will, in fact, end up in a political fight—that is, with a buying agency, a Crown corporation on the one side and a selling agency, a Crown corporation on the other—and the grain producers in the west will suffer as a result.

Mr. BERGER: I thank you for this answer and now I am going back to page 2 of your brief, where it states:

Unfortunately, while purchased inputs have increased the volume of farm products per acre and per man, the price the farmer receives for his produce has not kept pace with the cost of purchased inputs. Both large and small farmers find themselves on the same treadmill—

Do you not think this applies also to eastern farmers? I understand your point of view as far as western farmers are concerned, but do you have the same consideration for eastern farmers as you have for your own people for which I do not blame you, believe me?

Mr. MOLGAT: I would hope we are not taking purely a narrow provincial view in our statements. Certainly, we recognize that the eastern farmer is faced with the same problem. I was stating a question of general principle. I am sure your farmers are suffering in the same way. In many respects I know your farmers are suffering worse from the fact that their acreage is smaller than that of western farmers. I recognize that problem. This is not a parochial question.

Mr. BERGER: Now, when you state on page 4 that:

Initial payments can be easily raised before the end of the 1966-67 crop year.

How can you make such an easy statement? The government will have to pay for that. When I go back—