

Supply

taking the guarantee is no longer possible. You have to get most of your money from the market. The average for your crop district is what the payout will be.

• (1110)

Finally, I want to point out that the hon. member's area gets the highest coverage from that program because it is so tied to wheat and wheat is such a poor risk these days. The highest payments will go to the wheat areas. The areas which try to shift their production to meet the market demand will get the very lowest payouts, and mine is one of those.

Mr. Gustafson: There is no question that there has been a great deal of controversy over the programs and the various areas of the province. In answer to the last question the hon. member raised, one of the areas where both the producers and the different farm groups have voiced their opinion was certainly dealing with the pulse crops, canolas and such, and bringing that into should I say a fairer level with the grain production of especially wheat and durum wheat. The federal government was looking at this and making adjustments to this, in all fairness.

This is the point that I want to make on the criticism the hon. member makes of the national program. Nobody said it was perfect, but certainly it was much better than it is now, having been destroyed by the provincial government of Saskatchewan. These improvements need to be made and they will be made through the proper channels of discussing with farm groups, sitting down with the province of Saskatchewan, as the provinces of Manitoba, Alberta and Ontario did.

Mr. Althouse: If you had to live with it, you would have been complaining, too.

Mr. Gustafson: I suppose that politics has its place, but certainly politics took an awful toll on Saskatchewan. The provincial government of Saskatchewan decided to play politics. It said: "Well, we are in now. This looks like a Devine-Mulroney program so we had better throw it out and put something in for four years down the road when it will look like an NDP program".

Mr. Althouse: But the farm groups recommended the changes. They implemented the farm groups' recommendations.

Mr. Gustafson: It did not work. It cost the farmers of Saskatchewan a lot of money. Now they are coming back with cap in hand and asking us to make changes. How can we make changes that will be credible to the province of Manitoba, fair to the province of Alberta and fair to the province of Ontario after they have rejected a national universal program that was put in place after a lot of discussion by farmers themselves for the benefit of farmers?

This has been a major, major mistake. The Saskatchewan farmers will not forget it quickly.

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): I am surprised that the member for Souris—Moose Mountain, the parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister, did not spend a few minutes giving us an update on the supply management, the strengthening and clarification of article XI at the GATT negotiations. The government trade negotiator says this government is not pressing at all for the strengthening and clarification of article XI. Basically it has given up any effort to convince other nations regarding this article, which is so important to our national programs, especially in eastern Canada.

I wonder if he would comment on that.

Mr. Gustafson: On the programs relating to dairy, chicken production and marketing boards and so on, the minister of trade again and again in this House has indicated that the Canadian position before the GATT is one that protects that direction and will continue to do so.

The member is well aware of that. That is the record of this government and will continue to be.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member blamed the plight of the farmers on the trade war that has been going on for seven years. He and his government have been in power now for eight years, and are going into the ninth year.

Surely to goodness over eight years his government could have negotiated with other countries around the world and resolved this trade war. Who does he shift that blame on? He shifted all the blame on the NDP in Saskatchewan, and rightly so. I would agree with him there.

How can he justify that after eight years the trade war is still going on and still hurting the Canadian farmers?