

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

meaningful consultation by labour and manpower departments to assist these members of the work force.

• (10:10 p.m.)

To me, Mr. Speaker, it is a source of frustration and aggravation that one of the three top industries in Canada is seemingly relegated to meaningless concern. It is very difficult for me to understand and reconcile in my mind why those who should be concerned treat the crisis with such seeming apathy. I hope that the parliamentary secretary, whom I know to be a conscientious and responsible member, can give me some answers to clear my frustration and that of thousands of concerned Canadians who are suffering because of the pulp and paper industry crisis.

Mr. Bruce Howard (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to provide some answers to the question raised by the hon. member with respect to this difficult matter which has been part of the Canadian pulp and paper industry for many generations. The Canadian pulp and paper industry has always had a problem of trying to reconcile supply and demand in some kind of rational way. The history of the industry has been one of attempts at prorating supply in order to satisfy market demands appropriate to the industry. This has often been difficult.

It is difficult at the present time because of slack markets around the world, particularly in the United States, where the slow growth in the economy has produced a downturn in consumption during the last few months. Industry officials do feel, however, that the bottom of the market has been reached and that there is an upturn taking place at the present time. Nevertheless, there are serious, long-term problems within the industry.

A meeting did take place in Ottawa on December 6 last. It was attended by ten cabinet ministers, which is an indication of the seriousness with which the government considers the problem within the industry. Some of the topics looked at included taxation policy, in response to a request from the industry to compare Canadian taxation with the taxation imposed on other companies around the world, transportation cost problems, pollution abatement cost problems and the effect of regional development incentive programs. Other matters discussed were competition policy and the social obligations that the companies have in front of them in trying to make changes in their industry, modernize it and bring it up to date and at the same time take into consideration the needs of the employees.

As a result, the government agreed to examine many of these problems in conjunction with the industry. It agreed to do a study on taxation as it affects the industry in relation to its competitiveness around the world. The government agreed to study with the industry transportation costs and to undertake a long-range study of a strategy for the development of Canada's pulp and paper industry in relation to the problems it has and the markets it has available to it. I assure the hon. member that the government is considering most seriously the problems that exist in the industry at the present time.

The hon. member made mention of the overseas programs that the Department of Industry, Trade and Com-

[Mr. Marshall.]

merce has with respect to the promotion of markets for industries. I can assure him that the pulp and paper industry is one of those industries.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Order. The hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Skoberg).

GRAIN—REQUEST FOR TABELING OF REPORT ON
RATIONALIZATION OF HANDLING AND
TRANSPORTATION

Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, on November 29 I asked the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) when the report on the rationalization of grain handling and transportation would be made available to Members of Parliament and he took the question as notice. On December 9 I asked the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board (Mr. Lang) when this report would be tabled in the House, and I appreciate the fact that the minister is in the House tonight.

Somehow or other the real Mr. Farmer, the practical Mr. Farmer, is supposed to know something. He is supposed to listen only to the educated, to the law professors, to the degreed people. It used to be said by some law professors that all that one required to be a farmer was a strong back and a weak mind, but nowadays to be a successful farmer a fellow needs to have a good head and a sound education to understand the advice handed out to him on all sides by city men and select that which will do him the least damage.

A tremendous responsibility, therefore, rests upon those who have had the privilege of higher education. They must advise on issues where the implications may not be clear. They must guide the people through the complexities of modern technology and explain those complexities. That is partly why I asked the minister my question. I hope he will answer it tonight.

If one looks at the headlines which have appeared across the country this year one will realize why this question concerns the people of Canada and why some of these complexities they are facing are important. One headline reads, "Easier road to retirement." That refers to agriculture. Another reads, "Government may soon control farm output—Olson." That appeared in the *Ottawa Citizen*. Another headline reads, "Big selling job ahead." The heading over another article reads, "Encourage adjustment of farm units to more efficient sizes." Another article says in part, "The program is aimed at the small farmer who wants to stay in farming, but lacks sufficient acreage to develop a profitable business."

One of the Manitoba pool elevators has said that there is a lack of information regarding the implications of the proposed plan of stabilization. The headline in the *Moose Jaw Times-Herald*, October 25, says, "Lang wants to bring farm act back into House of Commons." Another headline says, "Either way the farmers lose." Still another headline says, "West becoming disillusioned with Liberals, Conservatives." Another headline says, "Sweeping revisions to agricultural policy sought in Ottawa by provincial ministers." Still another headline says, "New management skills suggested for farms."

I come now to something the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) said. He said, as reported: