

Agricultural Policies

agricultural program of Canada into reverse. They want to stop everything and go backward. It is not surprising but it is distressing that the New Democratic Party should be so unprogressive.

There are problems that need to be cured. There are problems in some of the agriculture industries in my riding and there have been problems in the past. On occasion winter frost has damaged the fruit trees in the Okanagan Valley. Also on occasion the federal government has come to the rescue with financial assistance. At the present time there are problems in respect of certain types of apples. They have broken down in storage for some mysterious reason. The federal government is carrying on research to determine what has caused that breakdown in storage. There has been excessive competition this year from international markets because of over-production of apples in other parts of the world.

There are problems involving the importation of cheap concentrate juices from Switzerland and other European countries. There has been the problem of synthetic juices being masqueraded as the real thing in the Canadian marketplace. I have directed the attention of the ministers concerned to these problems and they are being investigated at the present time. I have made many appeals in private to the ministers but today I am making the appeal publicly as well because I believe these things should be said in the House of Commons.

There are always problems in agriculture. This year the Department of Agriculture has a budget of \$360 million to aid the farmers of Canada in various ways. This fact is completely glossed over by members of the opposition. I suppose it would be glossed over if the figure were \$360 billion. They seem to regard any effort by the Department of Agriculture as being of no significance whatsoever. If any other industry in Canada required a \$100 million assistance program in one year, I wonder whether there would not be questions asked in the country about the solidity of that industry.

I say that members of the opposition continually want to ignore the facts in respect of agriculture. They complain that people are moving off the farms as if this were some reversible process. It has been going on ever since this country was formed. In 1939, 31 per cent of our population received its livelihood from agriculture. In 1941 the figure had dropped to 27 per cent. In 1951 the figure was 20 per cent, in 1961 it was 11 per cent and in

1966 it was 9 per cent. The projection is that by 1970 it will be down to 3 per cent or 4 per cent of the population.

All of us have to face change from time to time. It is regrettable that members on the other side of the House resent the fact that the world is changing, that things are changing and that people must adapt to the change. I ask hon. members opposite what they would have the people of Canada who are engaged in agriculture do. Would they have them sit on the farms and starve because there are no markets for the products they produce? Would they have us ignore the improvements in efficiency and in new machines that are available? If we did this, I ask how long would these people survive in agriculture. The only way in which any agricultural industry can survive anywhere in the world, and the only way in which we can feed the hungry people of the world, is by having an efficient agricultural industry. This requires up-to-date and modern methods. Let us be practical about this and see what can be done about it. Let us see whether there is an opportunity to channel people into productive and useful employment in other areas of our economy.

I have heard the leader of the New Democratic Party sanctimoniously say that surely with the hungry people there are in the world we should be able to give away this food and find some way to dispose of these surpluses. Well, it is a pious thing, but the leader of the New Democratic Party knows as well as I and others that there are limitations in respect of the amount of food we can give away around the world. A while ago the Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Lang) mentioned that we are giving away about \$75 million a year in the form of wheat flour and other wheat products. Our total food aid program this year will be about \$90 million.

I should like to mention to the two members of the Conservative Party who are in the House this afternoon that this figure might be compared with the \$10 million which represented the give-away in food aid when the previous Conservative government was in power. Yet we hear that we should do more. Of course we should, but the underdeveloped countries of the world are the developing countries. They are producing their own food products more efficiently.

Let us take India as an example. Now that India is producing nearly all it requires, if we were to give that country more than a certain amount it would mean that their own agricul-

[Mr. Howard (Okanagan Boundary).]