

To the contrary, every ceiling was eliminated. Big financiers were also allowed to raise their prices before they were asked to please refrain from increasing them for a little while.

And today, workers are accused of asking for wage increases because the administration fees charged by the bank have increased. Indeed, loans and taxes cost him more.

Therefore, I ask the government to revert to a more logical approach if it wishes to establish the justice of which our society has such a great need today.

• (9:10 p.m.)

[English]

Mr. Hu Harries (Edmonton-Strathcona): Mr. Speaker, I should like to congratulate both the hon. member for Bourassa (Mr. Trudel) and the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Douglas) on their contributions. I should particularly like to say how much I admire the contribution that is being made by the hon. member for Assiniboia toward a better understanding of the Prairie grain economy. I think his efforts are dedicated, sincere and quite obviously effective.

As a new member from western Canada, I was initially distressed to find that some hon. members from outside the Prairies seemed to fail to understand the critical and continuing importance of the grain industry to all of Canada. While I sympathize with my colleagues on both sides of the House for what sometimes seems to be an unnecessarily protracted discussion on western grain, I nevertheless believe that western members must continue to press upon the House a full realization of the economic importance of wheat and coarse grains.

It is my view that alone among the major industries of this country, agriculture has been forced to adjust to a wholly new technology unaided by any control of the price system such as is found in so many other industries. Agriculture has faced production adjustments by exacting a fierce toll from the little farmer and small producer. Our economy today is cheap food at the farm level only, because virtually all the increases resulting from automation and technology have been passed on to the consumer and have not been, as in so many other instances, usurped in part at least by labour and capital. Imposing this new technology upon the usual climatic uncertainties of Prairie grain growing areas has meant that the normal economic instability of that region has been greatly increased.

• (9:20 p.m.)

Contrary to what some of my eastern-oriented friends seem to believe, the Prairie grain economy has not been and is not today being nurtured by public financing. On a per capita basis or on a basis of per dollar productivity, the grain economy gets virtually nothing from the government but, on the contrary, makes an enormous national contribution. People such as my friend the hon. member for Assiniboia know the grain industry of the west, its importance and its continuing impact upon our nation. Again I congratulate him on his seconding of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

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The Address—Mr. Harries

I should like to deal very briefly with two matters. The first is the question of student employment. Because of the nature of the school population distribution that faces us today in Canada, we face a major problem over the next five years to find productive seasonal employment for senior high school students and post-secondary school students. The problem was made more difficult this year because of the generally quiet tone of the economy, but it would be wrong to suppose that this was the fundamental reason for the lack of adequate student employment opportunities.

It is quite clear that this problem will become worse and will reach very substantial proportions next year even if there is an economic recovery in the meantime. This, of course, is a problem that the government recognized and took steps to meet. I think many members will share my enthusiasm for the steps the government has taken, particularly in making hostel facilities available to the young people who were travelling across the land this summer. I believe this kind of activity ought to be encouraged.

It seems to me that with a nation which spans a continent, if we cannot do everything possible to encourage our young people to move from one part to another and visit people in other areas, we cannot possibly suppose that Confederation will be the success it ought to be. The idea of making money available in order to employ young people in government offices and government activities is generally one that is commendable, if not very imaginative. In view of the crash nature of the program this year, I think the results were quite clearly worth the effort; but surely we can conceive employment programs which do more than simply put young people into an office environment wherein they are clearly appendages and, for the most part, unnecessary to the successful functioning of the office. Apart from that, I believe it would be unfortunate if we educated the young people of this nation to believe that one can find the action in a government office while following summer-time employment. I think there is a much broader sphere available to us.

I hope that during the next several months the government will find the opportunity to develop ideas that will look to the development of smaller group activities related to projects that have the support of the youth of this country. It is not everyone's bag to be a cadet for the summer. Surely, with the clear and continuing interest that youth has in environment, there are many places in which their enthusiasm, their talents and their energies can be profitably employed.

It is quite obvious that in the price system which we generally accept as a regulator of our economic activities there is a very large gap when it comes to costing the real social aspects of a particular activity. Surely, in both rural and urban settings we can find programs which will appeal to youth, give them the opportunity to work in areas they find challenging and, at the same time, enable them to make a significant and continuing contribution to national development. If we cannot keep youth involved in the system in which we believe, or alter that system to