

Supply—Agriculture

both to apply for grain permit books. When the announcement was made, as it was in this case, that those payments were available up there, they were unable to take advantage of the legislation and obtain payments which other farmers in the country were able to get.

Sometimes a farmer has a poor crop which does not justify his applying for and obtaining a grain permit book. Because of the provisions of the Prairie Farm Assistance Act it may happen that they cannot obtain the compensation and benefit which the act makes available to them. They also are left out.

Finally, we have the farmers who grow grasses and oilseeds. I am thinking particularly of rapeseed. We have a great many farmers who have gone in for the growing of rapeseed in our part of the country. When they apply for grain permit books they are told they are not eligible. I am inclined to think that the officials of the wheat board have been too rigid in their interpretation of the legislation. Their interpretation is not altogether acceptable. I want to call to the attention of the minister to section 2, which is the interpretation section, of the Canadian Wheat Board Act. Section 2(1)(a) reads as follows:

"Actual producer" means a producer actually engaged in the production of grain.

I call the minister's attention to the fact that it does not necessarily say "engaged in the production of grain in the particular year in respect of which the grain permit book was applied for".

Second, the interpretation of "grain" is quite significant. The word "grain" is defined as follows:

(e) "Grain" includes wheat, oats, barley, rye and flaxseed.

I emphasize the word "includes" there because I think it is not a restricting word. Elsewhere throughout the interpretation sections of this act and in other legislation we find that the word "means" is used. For example, "elevator" is defined as follows:

(d) "Elevator" means a grain elevator, warehouse or mill—

There is a distinction between the use of the word "includes" and the word "means". When the word "means" is used it is restrictive, and you cannot go outside of it. I submit with all respect that when the word "includes" is used in the act for the purpose of making these acreage payments it could include rapeseed, for example, and the officials should have been more flexible and a little more liberal—I use "liberal" with a small "l", Mr. Chairman—and they should

have permitted people within the three categories I have mentioned to become entitled to the acreage payments.

I trust that the minister will pay some heed to these words and that reasonable consideration will be given to those who are still engaged in the process of making application. I know there are several hundred in my constituency who feel they have not obtained a reasonable application of the provisions of this scheme and they would like to be given consideration.

Mr. Southam: Mr. Chairman, before item No. 1 of the estimates of the Department of Agriculture carries I should like hon. members to bear with me for a few moments while I make some observations about agriculture. As hon. members know, I come from a riding in southeastern Saskatchewan which is basically agricultural. I had hoped to make some of these observations in a previous debate but sickness in my family prevented me.

Before continuing I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Minister of Agriculture. His riding adjoins the riding of Moose Mountain on the north, and during the five years that he was the leader of our party in Saskatchewan he spent a great deal of time doing research into agriculture and its economic aspects not only with respect to Saskatchewan but Canada as a whole. Therefore his assignment to this portfolio afforded me a great deal of pleasure. I am sure we can all look forward to great achievements in this department as he continues to hold this office. I should also like to congratulate his parliamentary secretary, the hon. member for Provencher. I am sure that his wisdom and knowledge so far as agriculture is concerned will mean that we can look forward to a great contribution in this field from him.

In listening to the comments of other hon. members in the house from time to time it has come to my attention that apparently there is still a lack of appreciation of what the government has done for agriculture in the over-all picture. In order to summarize the situation I should like to refer to a few statistics and thus emphasize my observations in this respect. For the three years prior to the present government taking office, the following were the figures for the agricultural estimates. In the year 1954-55 the total figure was \$88,310,304, in the year 1955-56, \$93,881,452, and in the year 1956-57, \$90,068,594, or a total for those three years of \$272,260,350. The comparative figures for the three years after the present government took office are as follows. In the year 1957-58 this government pumped into agriculture