

*Supply*

western provinces, will not be destroyed and be victims of the European and American trade wars in agriculture.

This government has failed them. Many of my constituents voted for the Conservative Party in 1984. They ended up voting for me in 1988. In fact I got over 50 per cent of the vote outside of the city of Regina in the last election.

Many of them had some hope and expectation that finally we would get, with a Conservative government, a government in Ottawa that would listen to the needs of western farmers. They had that expectation. Instead what they have received are *ad hoc* programs that are more motivated by political timetables than they are by securing the western farm economy.

I was talking to a farmer earlier this morning from around Edenwold. He remembered that the Minister of Agriculture announced a program in the fall of 1988 just before the federal election. The promise was that the money would be in the hands of the farmers by that Christmas. Indeed, the money was in the hands of the farmers by Christmas, but it was Christmas a year later.

• (1700)

He reports, as well, that there is some optimism at home because of the weather conditions. We are having a good, soggy, wet spring. Even with the drought that has gripped western Canada for the last number of years, at least by the indications of the spring, there is some hope. There is some possibility of getting a good crop this year. He is telling me that farmers are out there, trying to seed but, of course, they cannot afford the fertilizers and the other input costs because they do not have the cash flow.

We have seen this government and the government of Saskatchewan play political football with each other, trying to get some political mileage without spending a red cent. They are trying to tell the farmers back home that, yes, they will support them in getting some money to them to enable them to put a crop in this year. As the associate minister of agriculture and the minister in charge of the Wheat Board said earlier in the House, one cannot reap unless one sows. There are many farmers back home who would like to sow, but they do not have the cash to buy the seeds, the fertilizers, and the fuel in order to put the crop in. They are asking this government for help.

The Minister of Agriculture has said: "We are studying this. We are working on it. We are having meetings." Indeed, they have meetings. The Premier of Saskatchewan, in the Speech from the Throne opening the Saskatchewan legislature, stated that he had an agreement with the federal government. Some agreement! Farmers are still waiting today. They need that money. They cannot afford the political games that are being played between Regina and Ottawa. They have to know now what they can expect so that they can plan. Good agriculture and good farming practices mean planning. One needs this information. The farmers are not getting the information; they will still have to wait.

The minister announced, the other day, in answer to my colleague, that perhaps next week, on Friday when the Ministers of Agriculture will meet again, they will have something to announce. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, and then, perhaps not. Perhaps the date of some announcement will not be determined by the cycle of the crop, it will be more determined by the cycle of the political career of the Tory government in Saskatchewan.

We have heard a lot from the Tories about what a tremendous job they have done for western agriculture. Yet, as I said earlier in my remarks, the farmers back home feel betrayed because this Conservative government failed to produce a permanent program, a program that has been thought through, and a program that they can depend on that would be like a foundation to western agriculture. They have not received that from this government and that is what they need.

In the 1988 election, we proposed a well thought-through program. It was a program that begins to establish some income stability, at a certain level, to ensure that the family farm size of operation will have a guarantee and that they will be protected from the vagaries of international prices. We proposed, in our program, that we would strengthen institutions like the marketing boards and the Wheat Board and that we would institute programs that would help in the intergenerational transfer of farm lands so that this burden would be taken off the shoulders of every generation. What great stupidity it is that every generation has to pay off the banks in interest payments. This is a burden that we must lift off the shoulders of our farm community, so that we can have the intergenerational transfer of land, without all the interest charges. Those were the pro-