

Supply—Agriculture

of government expenditure. If this subsidy is cut off—it has been reduced for next year—it will make a terrific difference in the number of pounds of feed grain sent down east, because the Ontario farmers are now in a position where they are working very close to the line. A few cents difference on a hundred pounds of grain would just make the difference between profit and loss.

Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain): I did not intend to speak on this item. However, my good friend the hon. member for Moose Jaw-Lake Centre apparently is more or less speaking as an authority. I realize that, like me, he has gone into the production of Herefords and the raising of purebred cattle. I am not sure that he is familiar with all aspects of agriculture. I am very happy that at least on two occasions in his remarks he indicated he was speaking for himself and himself alone. I farm in that part of Saskatchewan whence he comes. I take the view, sir, as do most members of this party, that we are interested in agriculture from coast to coast. It may well be that in the economic society which we in this party visualize there might not be the necessity for some of those subventions and assistance. However, under the prevailing conditions I go along with the hon. members from the maritimes and from the coastal province who have indicated that if this freight assistance were not paid, then those people would be in a very difficult position indeed. Therefore, I support it.

Since we are talking about subsidies, I think we are taking a very short point of view when we are prepared to go along with the subsidization of gold mining, when we take it from one hole in Canada and put it in another hole in Kentucky and flood and protect it down there where it does nobody any good, if we object to subsidies on feed grains. Here we are talking about subsidizing feed grains for the little farmers, the people in the poultry industry who are making a living out of it. Surely, no one in this house would object to that idea.

I regret very much that the hon. member for Moose Jaw-Lake Centre does not agree with the principle which has been endorsed by the members of this group, namely, that we are interested in those engaged in agricultural production from coast to coast. I fully realize that during the war the freight assistance paid to Ontario hog producers, as an example, enabled those producers to produce their bacon hogs and receive at least \$6 more for their finished hog than we received in the west. We did not mind that. We feel that every phase of Canadian agriculture in every province in Canada should get a square deal. I am very sorry that the

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government saw fit to cut down the subsidy by \$5 a ton this year. I wish they had kept the subvention on certain grains going to different parts of Canada rather than to decrease it, as they have done.

Mr. Hosking: I had no intention of taking part in this debate until I heard the socialists introduce the topic of cutting off subsidies for Canadians. We have the wealthy farmer from Saskatchewan saying that his western farmers are no better off with this subsidy, and we find the Tories criticizing his remarks very much. Then the hon. member for Moose Mountain rises in his place and suggests there should be no subsidy on gold mining. Let me tell my hon. friend—

Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain): I did not say that. I said that if hon. members were prepared to support gold mining subsidies, then surely they should not be reticent about supporting such assistance as this.

Mr. Hosking: I do not accept the correction, for he went on to say that it did no good. Let me tell him this. One dollar spent on the gold subsidy employs more men than money in any other subsidy.

The Chairman: Order.

Mr. Hosking: It employs more men than any other subsidy paid by this house.

The Chairman: Order. May I remind the hon. member that we are discussing agriculture, not gold mining.

Mr. Hosking: I shall return to the subject of grain subsidies. This is one of the few subsidies that benefit farmers who raise livestock in the province of Ontario. There are not many farmers in Ontario who would criticize our government for continuing to pay the subsidy that it was wise enough to put on a few years ago, particularly when the type of agriculture that it benefits is not nearly as lucrative as the type of agriculture that is carried on in the western provinces.

Mr. Argue: Mr. Chairman, the thing that is wrong with this item and with the government's policy in relation to subsidies on feed grains is not that the subsidy is too high but that the government is out to reduce the subsidy and if the present trend continues I am afraid it is out to get rid of it entirely. Along with other hon. members, I believe that the subsidy on feed grains is essential to the welfare of the agricultural industry in Canada from one end of the country to the other. I do not believe with anyone that this subsidy is peculiarly favourable to