

*Supply*

In 1983, the federal Government collected directly by way of taxes from the oil and gas industry, primarily located in Alberta, \$4.7 billion. That was in direct taxes. Additional billions were lost as a result of the paying of less than world price. But directly by way of taxes there was an extraction from that part of the country of \$4.7 billion. In 1986, that was down to about \$400 million, or a reduction of approximately \$4.3 billion.

**Mr. Waddell:** Where did all the money go?

**Mr. Andre:** That money is staying in Alberta, producing, among other things, the record housing sales that are now being experienced. It accounts for the high level of retail sales in Alberta, a level higher than anywhere in Canada. House sales in Alberta last month were the highest in the history of that province.

Let us look at the agriculture sector. In 1983, federal contributions to farmers amounted to some \$300 million. In 1987, it is estimated that federal contributions will be \$2.5 billion, an increase of roughly seven to eight times the 1983 level.

How can anyone in their right mind, Mr. Speaker, say that under the Liberal-NDP coalition, the west was doing well; that the west was getting favoured treatment from Ottawa, and it is only under the Tories that the west is being abused?

These are the same Tories who have raised the farm support from \$300 million to \$2.5 billion; these are the same Tories who cut back on taxes from the oil and gas sector from \$4.6 billion to \$400 million.

The list goes on and on, Mr. Speaker. I do not think I will have time to go through the entire list.

Western Grain Stabilization Act payments are estimated to be \$859 million this year, and last year amounted to \$522 million. We had crop assistance payments of \$150 million and \$60 million in respect of emergencies and disasters. We also have the new grain deals with the U.S.S.R., Brazil, and Egypt.

Just this week we have had evidence from the OECD of the success that this Government has achieved in respect of the problems of western Canada. For the first time the OECD is looking at agriculture subsidies, and the rest of the world recognizes that this examination by the OECD flows from a Canadian initiative. It was the Prime Minister of this country who raised this issue at the Tokyo Summit; it was the Prime Minister of this country who instructed his Ministers to ensure that the question of agricultural subsidies be placed on the agenda of the GATT meetings.

It is under this Government that these long-standing problems, problems which had been left to fester, are finally being addressed. The members of the Opposition know in their souls that this is happening. Under the previous Government, it would have cost \$11 a tonne to ship grain, in comparison to a cost last year of \$6 a tonne.

The list of programs we have put in place is of such length it is difficult to know where to start. The establishment of farm debt review panels is but one example.

The members of the Opposition talk about agricultural debt. Yes, indeed, there is a lot of debt; and yes, indeed, the degree of debt has been a problem for agriculture across the country. As is apparent from the statistics, a lot of farmers have gone out of business all around the country as a result of farm debt and interest rates, but less so in Alberta than in the other province of the country. We have done something about this problem. Interest rates are down, and the consequent savings to the farmers are enormous.

The Hon. Member for Vancouver—Kingsway notes the high percentage of debt in his motion. Given the high percentage of debt, he ought to recognize the tremendous benefit accruing to debt holders as a result of the reduction in interest rates.

**Mr. Althouse:** I suppose the reduction in grain prices is a big help, too.

**An Hon. Member:** There he is, the Saskatchewan Rhodes Scholar.

**Mr. Andre:** The socialist opposite says it is the fault of the Mulroney Government that grain prices have gone down.

**Mr. Althouse:** No. You were talking about what has gone down. You put interest rates on an open-market basis, and they went down. So did grain prices. Open market!

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Order. The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Andre) has the floor.

**Mr. Andre:** Mr. Speaker, on the one hand they say we do nothing; on the other hand, they attribute to Prime Minister Mulroney the incredible power to control the world economy in grain.

**Mr. Althouse:** You are taking the credit for the fall in interest rates, a world situation.

**Mr. Andre:** We will take responsibility for all of our actions, for all of those matters over which we have control, and we will put our record of performance in terms of helping those hurt by events beyond our control against that of any other Government or Party.

● (1230)

If the Hon. Member were concerned about farmers, he would have been supporting free trade and amendments to the Transport Act. If he were concerned about the west, he would have supported those issues.

We refuse to take responsibility for rain on weekends or for the policies of the EEC, because we have no control over those policies.

Albertans know very well that the Government has been very responsive. Yes, indeed, things have been tough with the