

I noticed he said that licensing controls would be a bad thing because this would drive food prices up. I would at least commend to him the words of the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner), who said it was bound to drive prices down. I suggest to the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar that the hon. member for Crowfoot's logic tends on the whole in this regard to be a little better, but unfortunately for him the facts have moved in the other direction and prices at the moment have tended to go up rather than down. However, that is one of the problems which arise in these logical arguments. It was only a couple of weeks ago that the hon. member for Crowfoot and the hon. member for Lisgar (Mr. Murta) had said that prices had topped out in the world. They were absolutely sure of that. At that time they were committing themselves firmly to rapeseed at \$5. I suggested that if they have that kind of sureness that this is the top price they should go into the market and make some money.

I suspect they did not do that, and since rapeseed is now about \$1 higher it was a good thing they did not. I hope some lessons may have been learned about some quick judgment as to when prices are at the top, when prices are at the middle and when they are going down. The Conservatives are good at knowing these things. They always know things the day after they happen. It is, of course, their sense of vision to predict and state clearly what has happened after it has been done.

• (2120)

Mr. Doug Rowland (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Gleave) and I presented the motion which is being debated this evening we did so with the full support of our caucus colleagues and for the major purpose of advising the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board (Mr. Lang), and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan), that if their new national feed grains policy involves the abandonment of Canadian Wheat Board's supervision of the interprovincial movement of feed grains, they will be involved in a war the like of which they have never seen—and they have seen a few wars over agriculture in this House in the last few years: there will be absolute hell to pay. There is not a major organization representing western farmers that is not adamantly opposed to the abandonment of the concept of the orderly marketing of grain under the auspices of the Canadian Wheat Board.

I have in my office, as I am sure have most hon. members, a fistful of letters, telegrams and news releases from every major national farm organization, from local farm organizations and from individual farmers demanding that members of this House prevent the abandonment of the orderly marketing of feed grains under the Canadian Wheat Board. The following message, circulated by Co-operative Implements Ltd. to guests attending the opening of its new Winnipeg plant, is typical. I would like to read it in its entirety because it contains the gist of all the messages I have received:

Co-operative Implements as a farmers' institution, like so many other farmers' institutions, was organized for the purposes of improving farmers' bargaining powers and to protect them from exploitation by the monopolies. As such, we are part of and have an interest in supporting the farmers' movement in their struggle to maintain and expand orderly marketing of farm products.

Feed Grains

Your board of directors view with alarm recent reports that the government of Canada is in the advanced stages of returning to the open market, either directly or indirectly, feed grains, including wheat used for feed.

This action, if taken by the government of Canada, would work to the benefit of the grain trade and the speculators of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, and not in the interests of either grain growers or livestock producers in Canada.

Should this retrograde step be taken it will, in fact, destroy 70 years of hard work and struggle by the farm movement for orderly marketing of farm products by allowing the return of the speculators and the manipulators of the grain trade through the Winnipeg Grain Exchange.

The market authority of the Canadian Wheat Board must be maintained and strengthened to effectively

1. Manage grain supplies entering both the domestic and export markets;
2. Maintain grain handling facilities and transportation;
3. Maximize returns to grain producers and assure livestock, dairy and poultry feeders necessary supplies;
4. Eliminate the influence of the grain speculator and manipulator from the market.

Your board of directors calls upon the government of Canada and the provinces to strengthen the marketing powers of the Canadian Wheat Board. We ask you as responsible co-operators and members of the farm movement, upon your return home, to remain alert to this situation and to actively support those farm organizations who are legitimate members of the farm movement and who are struggling to maintain and extend orderly marketing to the Canadian Wheat Board.

That is the message that Co-operative Implements had. That is the message the National Farmers Union had, that the Canadian Federation of Agriculture had, that the Manitoba Wheat Pool, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and the Alberta Wheat Pool had. It took the farmers of western Canada 30 years of effort to place interprovincial trade in feed grains under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board. That jurisdiction has now existed for 23 years. There is no way that western farmers are going to allow any new feed grains policy to abandon the concept.

What we want this evening is a definite, concrete, unequivocal statement from the government—we did not get it from the minister's remarks—that the Canadian Wheat Board will continue to be the centre-piece of any feed grains marketing policy. An attempt has been made to suggest that we are getting excited over nothing and that the government is in favour of orderly marketing. What we want, and what will end the malaise among farmers in western Canada, is a clear statement that it is not government policy to dismiss the Canadian Wheat Board from its responsibility in respect of feed grains.

Indeed, we in the NDP want to see the Board's powers extended to cover flax, rye and rapeseed as well. What we want at the very least is an ironclad guarantee from the government that there will be no diminution of Canadian Wheat Board powers. We did not get that assurance tonight. The premiers of the western provinces are asking the federal government for that assurance, and they have not received it.

We on this side of the House are not unaware that there is discontent in some parts of the country with current marketing arrangements for feed grains. But correcting those problems can only be properly accomplished through use of the Canadian Wheat Board, and not through its abandonment. In this light I want to quote a brief state-