

Adjournment Debate

As the Hon. Member pointed out, these have risen from a maximum levy of \$500, based on gross grain receipts for an individual farmer of \$25,000 when the program was first put in place in 1976, to a maximum in effect at the start of the 1983 program year of \$1,200 per producer based on a maximum of \$60,000. As the Hon. Member must know, this element of flexibility in the legislation is based on the objective of the program to move toward covering 90 per cent of eligible grain sales; that is, as prices rise and volumes increase contributions by way of levy should rise and be adjusted to ensure that 90 per cent of grain receipts are covered under the program.

While this element of flexibility exists in the legislation, there is not the flexibility to make the changes that have been suggested, such as the one to the averaging period on which payouts are calculated. These are quite clearly set up on a five-year basis. The reasons for this, and the problems which may be attendant on a change for a shorter period, I have already outlined in my respons to the Hon. Member for Crowfoot (Mr. Malone).

I should point out, however, that the Act is not without other elements of flexibility. For example, there are provisions

that would result in the current levy for producers, set at 2 per cent, being reduced to 1.5 per cent with effect in January 1984, and there is a potential for a further drop to a 1 per cent levy rate. This element of adjustment built into the Act brings down levy contributions for farmers and for the Government as well. When it is established that the fund has reached a size where interest accumulation becomes large, a drop in the levy rate to 1 per cent would lower the maximum levy of \$1,200 to \$600, based on gross receipts of \$60,000. As has been stated many times recently, the whole program is under review, and the Minister will be giving consideration to changes, not only to the number of years on which to base payout calculations, but also on other matters brought out in the review.

I assure the Hon. Member that I will pass his constructive suggestions on to the Minister and that they will go on to the review committee.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m.

At 6.18 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.
