

this \$100 million interim subsidy program or whether it be on the basis of the long-term program, I believe that the answer to our agricultural and food needs in Canada does not lie just in building industrial farms. I think there are many examples throughout the world today which prove that industrial farming, or big corporate farming, is not the answer to a viable agricultural industry.

There has been a great deal said, and I am concerned about the attitude of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) in this regard, that it is inevitable that the family farm unit will disappear, and the larger economic unit will take over. This is not the answer. If this is the reason the government, particularly the Minister of Agriculture, is moving to centralize authority in the hands of the federal government—and this refers to Bill C-176 as well as this program, the two being inseparable—then I think it is wrong.

There must be an approach whereby the growing of living things can roll with the punches, can meet the various crop conditions and various market conditions in such a way that the farm unit itself is not destroyed. It may be a cliché, and it may be in the minds of some a reactionary approach, to say that just because the farm unit has been the secret of our farming efficiency and our ability to produce food in the past, it does not follow that it must be so in the future. Yet, Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that a real, viable agricultural industry in Canada can only come about when the basic rights of the family farm unit are protected vis-à-vis the industrial or farm approach.

Certainly Russia, with its corporate farming approach of communal farming, has illustrated this fact. It is a most interesting fact that in spite of all modern equipment and efficiency the actual per capita production of grain in Russia was more in the so-called incompetent and corrupt time of the Czars than it is now through communal farming. This is why the Russian agricultural pattern is changing back to individual units, or at least reversing itself in a very definite way, and it is evidence of the fact that the Russians have not found the answer in communal or corporate farming.

My concern, not only with respect to this bill but with respect to Bill C-176, with respect to the various utterances of the minister responsible for the marketing of grain and of the Minister of Agriculture himself, is that this whole philosophy of building up federal control is a wrong approach which will cause irreparable harm to our agricultural industry. It is wrong for the federal government to think it knows the agricultural situation so that it can tell the farmer when he can sow, what he can grow, when he can harvest and what he can market. This is the trend facing the farmer today, and that is why I am so much concerned with regard to the grains stabilization program set out in Bill C-224.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It being one o'clock I do now leave the Chair.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

Prairie Grain Stabilization Act

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. John Burton (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, prior to the commencement of consideration of this bill today this House had already spent two days in debate on it. We are now on the third day of debate and I think, for a number of reasons, it is entirely proper and necessary that the House give some close and careful consideration to the legislation.

The first reason is that the problems facing rural Canada are very closely integrated with some of the fundamental economic problems facing Canada which have been under debate in the past two days, in particular the new unemployment figures. The fact is that there is a malaise in the Canadian economy. We see it demonstrated in the urban sector of the economy with the unemployment figures which are well known to all hon. members. We also see that malaise in the rural sector of our economy and our society. I suggest there is a relationship between those two sectors, and the malaise that exists in each contributes to a further accentuation or intensification of the problems facing each of the major sectors.

The second reason is that rural Canada is in a crisis situation. A process of disintegration is under way that could result in its complete destruction. Parliament has a responsibility to stop that destruction and to take steps to help construct a healthy rural society.

Bill C-244 will have an effect on the future of the Prairies. It is not clear whether the effect will be a healthy one. This bill contains a permanent plan which the government now intends to rush through Parliament, using the transitional payment of \$100 million as a carrot and a stick—a mighty big stick. For that reason, I think we need to consider very seriously just where we are going with respect to this legislation. The minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, who introduced this legislation, has insisted that the two aspects of this bill be considered together. In terms of the power available to the government he, of course, has a right to persist in that course. I suggest to him, however, that he is being too clever by half in some of the schemes that he tries to foist on the prairie farmer and on this House. I think it is time he started to think of the interest and the future of the prairie farmer, rather than his own political future when dealing with these problems.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (2:10 p.m.)

Mr. Burton: The problems are too great and serious to be fooled with in the way the minister has demonstrated in dealing with this legislation. It is reprehensible that the minister chose to issue a press release last Friday concerning the debate that had taken place in the House on a previous piece of legislation. Before making his own speech in the House on this particular bill, he issued a press release accusing the opposition of filibustering the stabilization bill. This illustrates an element of