

also could raise up to 5,000 new members within the province of Ontario.

The hon. member mentioned the problem of farmers not having been paid for the hay they delivered to Manitoba. That was an agreement that Manitoba had made. We made an agreement to pay one-third of the cost of transportation, Manitoba would pay one-third, and the railroads would pay one-third. We did not use up the funds which we have allocated for that program because it started to rain and they did not need as much hay from Ontario as they thought they would need.

I agree with the hon. member that the Ontario farmers have really co-operated and have come forward to say, "We have so many bales of hay which we do not need, we have a big crop." And they let them have it at a very reasonable price. Some people could not believe it was being sold for as low a price as it was. They were not trying to take advantage of the bad situation which existed because people were suffering from the drought. If someone has not paid, I will contact my colleague, the provincial minister of agriculture in Manitoba, but this is the first time such a representation has been made to me. The hon. member spoke about unity in the country. One of the members last night mentioned that some people at the Outlook conference made representations to him about some of their concerns. But let me say to the hon. member that this was one of the most positive meetings we have ever had and one of the best attended. As I said, farm leaders, national, provincial and regional, were all there. There were people from the private sector, from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and from other agro-business organizations. They all said it was a very positive meeting. I cannot say they were gleeful, but they seemed to be happy about the economic position of agriculture in Canada and the programs we have established. I would challenge the hon. member to find better programs for farmers to run their own business anywhere else in the world. No other country in the world allows its farmers to run their business as we allow them to do in Canada. Sure, we have to work with the provinces, and we do have a close working relationship with them. I say to the hon. member that it is not us who are causing disunity, not us in agriculture and not us in this government. I asked him to check some things that people on the other side of the House are saying when they suggest separatism, and all that kind of thing. The hon. member will find that people in agriculture from coast to coast are willing to share those things which grow in our ground. In these working relationships and in our national marketing boards we have the real ideal of confederation and unity.

● (2020)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Côté: Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to take part in the debate the Committee of the Whole House of Commons is holding tonight on the important question of agriculture. If I may, I would also like to thank the minister and his officials for being here to help us deal with this question. Mr. Chairman, I believe that when we talk about

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agriculture, we are talking about life. If we were not so fortunate as to have such efficient farmers and agricultural producers in Canada, I believe that the well-being of every one of us would be affected.

The Department of Agriculture has always, but more particularly over the last few years, tried to provide Canadian farmers with programs geared to their needs and conducive to outstanding performance. It is because of the effectiveness of government programs that producers have been able to achieve record productions. During the seventies, agricultural cash incomes have increased tremendously as net farming income went from slightly over \$1 billion in 1970 up to \$4.1 billion in 1979.

Moreover, Canadian agricultural industries have become among the most effective and productive in the world. It has already been pointed out that Canada only has 3 per cent of the world's farm lands but this point should be emphasized over again. In spite of this, Canada is one of the major food growers in the world, producing 6 per cent of the wheat and barley, 12 per cent of the oats, 17 per cent of the milk, and 2 per cent of all meat and dairy products. In addition Canada exports over 70 per cent of its grain, which is the highest proportion in the world. Between 1975 and 1978, the productivity of farmers was nearly twice that of the other industries. In short, our farming community should be the envy of everyone both in Canada and abroad.

Mr. Chairman, the constituency that I represent, Rimouski-Témiscouata, is essentially rural. In my riding, farmers make every effort to improve their crops to meet the most stringent standards of Agriculture Canada. Some producers carry out their own experiments through Agriculture Canada special programs. For instance, a farming co-operative has been created in Saint-Benoît de Packington, in the Témiscouata area, for growing cauliflower and Chinese lettuce, and this program is very successful. I believe that it is through programs of this type that regional agriculture, if I may use this expression, will be able to develop in harmony with its environment.

I would not want to leave the House with the impression that I am an expert in this field; I am not, even though I was raised on a farm. My father was a farmer for 50 years and lived through all the plights the milk industry had to suffer from 1940 up to the present days when pasteurization and sophisticated milking methods have become common practices. In view of the significant progress accomplished in farming, especially on dairy farms, I wish to congratulate the department and the Minister of Agriculture for the personalized assistance they have extended to dairy producers.

We live in a part of the country with wide temperature ranges and I heard from the committee on agriculture that the research service was doing extremely important experiments to develop crops that might thrive in colder climates like the one prevailing in my area, for instance. So, I am anxious to see