

*Supply—Agriculture*

for us to make it applicable on an individual basis. But, with that limitation, it has been very useful. The changes have been most effective, and I am sure the people in my constituency would wish me to compliment the government on having made these changes and on the way in which they have been administered.

Recently I noticed that the legislature of the province of Alberta saw fit, in dealing with agricultural matters, to pass a resolution suggesting that the government should embark upon a two-price system in this country. Without in any way commenting upon that, I would think it would be more in the interests of the people of Alberta if the government of that province were to take steps to implement the provisions of the Crop Insurance Act, which they are entitled to do, by passing complementary legislation in the province of Alberta.

The province of Manitoba did a noble job last year in connection with the two or three trial areas. I understand they are going to amplify it this year. I do believe—although I may be wrong in this—that the province of Saskatchewan has passed enabling legislation, but thus far the province of Alberta has seen fit not to recognize in any way that they can, if they wish, take advantage of this federal legislation. I am suggesting that, instead of passing resolutions dealing with subjects which are beyond their competence, they might be better advised to do something which will be of some use to the people of the province of Alberta.

I wish to compliment the personnel and the officials of the department in connection with a most useful service performed by the two experimental farms in the Peace river country. One of these farms is situated in the Fort Vermilion area, some 500 to 600 miles north of the city of Edmonton, in the centre of a tremendous area of unexploited agricultural land. I suppose that at this time none of us knows to what extent in the future the people of the world may require the production from lands not being used at the present time for agricultural purposes. All we can do is to make a guess; but the valuable service which these people are performing in testing and assessing the merits of the different soils and finding out what crops can be grown there has been a great benefit to the people of the north.

I would suggest that when the minister examines the estimates of his department from time to time that he make certain that these people have every opportunity to pursue the very useful work in which they are now engaged. I say the same thing with regard to the experimental farm at Beaver Lodge. As a result of the work done there these

people have made available to the farmers of the Peace river country fescue grasses and grains which can be grown in our country. This has enabled many of our farmers to branch out, to diversify, to get out of cereals into the type of agricultural production for which the world has need, for which there is a market and which can be sold for cash. I hope that these people will not be forgotten but will be permitted to continue their experiments.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I want to deal briefly with another point raised by the hon. member for Jasper-Edson. I refer to the basis on which acreage payments have been made over the last year. At first blush I think we can say the government was wise to take advantage of existing machinery. The statistical information gathered together by the officials of the Canadian wheat board for the purpose of issuing grain permit books, in large part, gives all the facts and information necessary on which to base those payments. I think the government was wise to do that rather than to embark upon the setting up of expensive and extensive machinery and personnel to go out and gather the facts required to make those payments.

It has been found in the past that where payments of this kind have been made the cost of administration was excessively high. Certainly that has not been the case in so far as the acreage payments are concerned. Nevertheless, I think we should remember that the statistical information gathered up and brought together by the officials and the agents of the wheat board is for the purpose of a specific act, namely the Canadian Wheat Board Act, and will not necessarily suit the purposes in all respects in so far as the making of acreage payments is concerned. I am afraid that this is what has happened in several instances.

I realize it is utterly impossible in any kind of remedial legislation to provide 100 per cent relief and benefit to all people who are entitled to it. There will always be a few left out on the fringes. This is something we have to accept as basic, but I do feel that there could have been more flexibility in connection with the administration of the payments even with the information which was available. I have three particular types of cases up in my district, particularly in the areas more remote from railhead.

Sometimes the farmers will feed as much grain as possible and by the time their feeding operations are concluded they find it simply does not pay them to haul what grain is left a distance of 200 or 300 miles to the elevator at Grimshaw, which is the nearest point to which they have access. Consequently, in most instances they do not