

● (1330)

In my travels I detected that producers do not expect miracles. They do not expect Government to cure all their problems, problems which they recognize are not the making of the Government or the making of Canadian agriculture. I also detect that producers would be satisfied if their returns for the forthcoming crop year, for the 1986-87 crop year, were equal to what they will receive for the current crop year, the 1985-86 crop year. That would be my personal suggestion to the House.

In saying this, I recognize that at this time it is simply too soon to determine what support would be necessary because world wheat stocks, while they are large, could certainly disappear in a hurry, and that has happened in the past. To make an early panic payment for political expediency would not serve the country well. If in fact part way through the next crop year prices have materially improved, the need for Government involvement would certainly be lessened or in fact could disappear.

The point is that we are talking about a crop year which has not yet begun, the crop year that will begin on August 1. In the meantime, farmers can rest assured that the Government understands the problems of agriculture and is indeed sympathetic to them.

Concerns were raised with the committee about possible change in production patterns motivated by the increase in the domestic wheat price. Therefore, the committee suggests that the Minister of State for Canadian Wheat Board (Mr. Mayer) try to ensure that the two-price wheat policy continue to reflect historic market share. In other words, if 95 per cent has previously gone to the Canadian Wheat Board area and 5 per cent elsewhere, then the benefits should continue to be so allocated regardless of any changes in regional volume.

I note, Mr. Speaker, that you are signalling that my time is almost up. I should like to conclude by saying that the establishment of the two-price wheat committee is consistent with a long line of initiatives which have been put forward by the Government, by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) and by the Minister of State for Canadian Wheat Board. It must be noted that the recommendation to increase the price of wheat domestically from \$7 to \$10 per bushel is a partial response. If conditions continue and unfold as projected, clearly that increase in domestic wheat price, if it comes about, will not be enough. If these future forecasts prove correct, clearly more action is necessary—consequently, the fourth recommendation concerning the deficiency or stabilization payment. Indeed, we have commitments from the involved Ministers that the Government will continue its support of agriculture.

The report of the Special Committee on the Pricing of Domestic Wheat means many things. Should Government act on it, it will mean more for the farmer, as I mentioned earlier. It will mean marginally higher prices to the consumers of wheat-based products. I trust they will recognize that this is an

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interim and urgent measure designed as a response to the crisis in which Canadian farmers find themselves. The report noted that the pricing regime intended to prevent undue increases to consumers. There was a stated intention to prevent regional dislocation. Also the report recognizes that the two-price wheat system is not an entire answer but rather part of the solution, and certainly the Government Treasury is not the entire answer. As well, the report emphasizes the importance of trade negotiations both through GATT and through the pursuit of an international grain agreement.

Finally, I should like to say that I think it represents a bit of a triumph in terms of parliamentary process and parliamentary reform, in that a Private Member can put forward a motion with some expectation that something may come of it. In terms of that process, we have been able to follow a Private Member's Bill which in turn has manifested itself in a special committee, which in turn has been constituted to travel the country and has been in a position to formulate a report to the House. That process indicates that Private Members can have meaningful input, input which can and does influence government policy.

I see that my time has come to an end. I thank the House for providing me with that time.

Mr. Boyer: Mr. Speaker, I listened very attentively to the Hon. Member for Swift Current—Maple Creek (Mr. Wilson). It will not surprise any of us that in a very masterful way, of which he is capable, he has presented to the House the considerations presented before the parliamentary committee which produced the report on the pricing of domestic wheat. I was particularly interested in listening to what he had to say on the subject of alternatives which were considered by the committee, in light of the fact that the recommendation is an increase from \$7 to \$10 per bushel in the price of domestic wheat.

The Hon. Member indicated that this recommendation was a partial response, thinking in terms of the global situation and what the Americans and the Common Market are up to. It is also a partial response in terms of the domestic situation. My abiding concern with the recommendation is that it is a 10 per cent solution for a 100 per cent problem. The amount of wheat being produced in Canada which goes on to the domestic market is but a small fraction of the total production. Therefore, this increase to \$10 per bushel in the domestic wheat price will only have a limited and partial effect.

The Government is committed to ensuring that wheat producers or farmers are able to carry on and obtain some return for a fundamentally important activity. The wheat farmers are one of at least four groups in the chain. As well there are the processors, the retailers, and the consumers.

I have read in the report the concerns outlined by the processors about a counter-productive step being taken if we go to a \$10 per bushel price. I have also heard talk that the high domestic price would result in significant price increases to consumers, increased imports, and a decline in the entire