

Supply—Agriculture

agreement. I believe that the price range our negotiators achieved was a very great success. I believe they are to be commended rather than denigrated for their performance. It is hoped and believed that their great success will be embodied in the world wheat agreement, which again will very much improve the position of the wheat farmer.

Mr. Southam: On a point of privilege, Mr. Chairman, may I say that we have listened to the minister suggest that the western farmers were not in agreement with the signing of a new wheat agreement. This is what we advocated and developed in the first place.

The Chairman: Order, please.

Mr. Greene: Well, perhaps the hon. member wishes to change his position. What I believe he said was that we should never have abandoned the world wheat agreement.

Mr. Southam: We said that it should not have been allowed to lapse.

Mr. Greene: If the hon. member was familiar with the nature of the Kennedy round discussion he would have known that if we had not let the world wheat agreement lapse we could not have entered into the Kennedy round to renegotiate these far better minimums and maximums in the interests of the Canadian farmer. I believe it is totally wrong to blame anyone for the fact that the wheat prices went down after the Kennedy round, or to blame our negotiators or the Canadian government for the fact that there was a decline in world wheat prices which naturally made the buyer nations reluctant to implement the findings at the conclusion of the Kennedy round into the world wheat agreement.

I believe the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam was quite right in this regard. He did not attempt to play politics with this. He said that world wheat prices went down by reason of the fact that there had been very large crops in the Communist countries and—I do not know whether or not he alleged this—the fact that the Americans brought I believe 30 million acres out of the soil bank into production. These were the reasons the world wheat prices went down. If one attempts to formulate a policy having in mind the facts, rather than playing politics, I think he must accept as fact that the world wheat prices went down because of natural reasons, and not because of any failure on the part of the Canadian negotiators or the

Canadian government. Negotiations have been going on since, as I believe the Minister of Trade and Commerce has often stated here. I believe these negotiations will be fruitful and will result in a new world wheat agreement which will implement the higher price range that was achieved at the Kennedy round. If this comes to pass, as I believe it will, it will certainly place the western farmer in a much better position than he was in prior to the Kennedy round, and I feel certain he will appreciate the efforts which were made at Geneva by the Canadian negotiators.

I should like to deal with the points raised by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam, because I think he and the hon. member for Lambton-Kent brought in some very constructive points which I believe are valid and could add something extremely useful to the discussions in respect of the direction that agricultural policy should take and the direction in which we should be moving. I think the hon. member for Lambton-Kent originally suggested that we should move in the direction of an incomes policy in agriculture. He suggested the implementation of Dr. Gilson's paper in this regard. I believe that the same general line of approach was taken by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam with regard to the question of the marketplace in which the farmer finds himself today, a marketplace which is not free.

If I understood the position of these hon. gentlemen correctly I believe they both indicated that we should be moving toward some type of incomes policy, if we want to keep agriculture in a healthy state and if we want to obtain a satisfactory level of income for the agricultural producer in the non-free marketplace which exists today. I think it is a fact that the marketplace is no longer the free marketplace it was when the agricultural policy of the past was conceived. If the farmer is to get a fair shake in this non-free marketplace, there will have to be new approaches which do not presume as at present that the farmer is dealing in a free marketplace where the consumer has a free choice. I think this is an area of suggestion and direction which merits the very careful consideration of those who are serious about attempting to improve the lot of the farmer today. I believe that when hundreds of thousands of farmers are dealing with very few buyers in the non-free marketplace it is inevitable that the farmers will get the worst of the deal until the time comes when they have equal control one way or another over the