

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

over the period from 1926-66 it was estimated that the net benefits obtained were probably of the order of from \$2 to \$3 billion annually and might well exceed those derived from all other agricultural improvements.

This is one of the reasons in support of the suggestion that there should be evaluation of machinery. The following is one of the recommendations of Mr. Barber:

Accordingly it was recommended that the Canada Department of Agriculture set as its short term goal to be reached by 1980 the allocation of 10 per cent of its social research budget to supporting improvement in farm machinery.

It seems to me, as a farmer, that the system of testing agricultural machinery operated in Saskatchewan in the past received almost universal approval. I have in mind the reports of the Agricultural Machinery Administration. One heard farmers quoting the AMA reports as to what certain machines could do or could not do. Many people were critical when the program was dropped, but consideration is now being given to re-establishing it.

I should like to know whether the government intends to do anything. Professor Barber recommended that something be done. In view of the success of the program in Saskatchewan, is it not time to consider again the advantages which were derived from a project of this kind? It is not only farmers who benefit. It has been suggested that we might provide testing facilities for Canadian farm machinery manufacturers which are small by world standards and which do not have the means or the facilities required to carry out elaborate testing on their own. As a result they may not have been getting their share of the farm machinery market.

If we could do something to improve the technology of our home-made farm machinery, so to speak, we might not only be able to supply a larger share of our home

market but also sell more abroad. I suggest to the government and to the parliamentary secretary that what I am suggesting would be of advantage to all Canadian farmers, not just to prairie farmers. Imagine a machine shut down at harvest time for lack of a 25-cent seal! It is not a good thing to happen but it has happened. These machines should be tested thoroughly before they are put on the market; it would save the farmer and the country a lot of money. Mr. Speaker, we have procrastinated long enough and I believe it is time we did something. I want to know what the government intends to do.

Mr. Marcel Lessard (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) I am pleased to inform the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley (Mr. Thomson) that under the auspices of the Canada Committee on Agricultural Engineering discussions were held as late as September 22-24 among the federal government, provincial governments and the universities on the subject of the Royal Commission on Farm Machinery.

As to the question raised concerning assistance from the federal government, I must say that up to now we have received no requests from provincial governments concerning present programs. At the moment a committee within the department is studying the practical application of some of the recommendations contained in the Barber commission report and I can assure the hon. member that these discussions within the department and between the provinces and the federal government will be continued. I am sure that very good results will flow from these discussions. We may be in a position in a short time to announce interesting programs and progress which might help to solve the difficulties raised, quite properly, by the hon. member.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.