

Feed Grains

more grain and meat to supply domestic markets. We believe in an aggressive policy for export markets as well.

● (2110)

That is the context in which this policy is to develop. It is to be a policy in which, so far as possible, we remove inequities in the way in which products in this country may move, in the way in which feed grain and meat move, and indeed the way in which they may move in comparison one with another. In this country generally speaking the rule should be that the natural advantages of an area should decide the production, not artificial barriers erected at one time or held over from bygone days. That is the objective, and I should like to hear what hon. members have to say about that.

Let me say something, however, about what our policy will and will not be, at least in my judgment. I believe that the new feed grain policy toward which we are moving will indeed produce more orderly marketing in Canada than we have had before, and this will be good for all sectors and sections in this country as we develop the growing market for grain and meat which we foresee.

Hon. members particularly from the NDP are talking about orderly marketing in the past as something which must be preserved. I ask them whether they consider there was orderly marketing when a few years ago barley was moving at distress prices from farm to farm in the Prairies regions, when it was moving at one price range in certain parts of Alberta and at another price range in certain parts of Manitoba and at a different price range in Saskatchewan. A completely disorderly situation existed at that time.

Well, the NDP say, why did you not stop that? Of course, one of their long-time arch allies, that socialist who unfortunately leads the National Farmers Union, Roy Atkinson, says that if grain is moving from farm to farm in the prairies and across provincial borders, why do we not have more policemen and make sure that we enforce the rules and stop the movement of the grain. He would have us do it even from farm to farm, no doubt, with a policeman at every farm. He would have us exercise control so that the grain could not be moved without some kind of permission or licensing. I will have no part in any system like that.

Such a system would not work. Even worse, it would really disguise the fact that grain would be valued at two very different prices in terms of grain fed on farms in distress areas, even if not moving at distress prices, and grain which moves in the commercial system. I should like to remind hon. members that no one has even raised the question of the way in which the Canadian Wheat Board has basic and full control of our grain operations and particularly the way in which grain is moved into export markets.

I wish to remind hon. members that less than one-third of the feed grain produced on the Prairies is delivered to the Canadian Wheat Board. The rest is fed on the farm or traded from farm to farm or to feed mills in the prairie region. Only one-eighth of the feed grains produced in the prairie provinces is sold to eastern Canada by the Canadian Wheat Board under the existing system. A great proportion of the wheat delivered to the Canadian Wheat Board has been, and by the nature of the relative size of

the markets would always be, available and sold on export markets. The Canadian Wheat Board has performed a superb role in knowing how grain is moving in Canada and for export, and in knowing the quantities of grain—barley, wheat and oats—which have been committed for sale overseas. Therefore we have been able to ensure that there would always be in Canada, unlike some other countries, a full assurance of an adequate supply of feed grains for domestic purposes, thanks to the supervision and guidance of the Canadian Wheat Board.

No one has suggested that that control be removed from our existing system. That is a very important part of orderly marketing. Once upon a time the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool had clearly adopted the principle that there was need for a fair price for feed grain between different areas of the country. Various committees were set up by the Canada Grains Council and by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, to cite two of the most important. Mr. Ted Turner, the president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, sat on one of the committees. Mr. Ted Boden, vice-president of the pool as well as the president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture, sat on the other. Both had accepted the principle that grain should move at fair prices between regions of this country.

I am sorry to see from a recent report that they had moved away from that policy, and I hope I can persuade them that this would not be in the interests of Canada. Certainly the federal government must attempt to ensure that products move freely and fairly from one section of the country to the other. Perhaps it is different with the NDP, whose only members who are really interested in farming matters come from the Prairies and who therefore state prairie policies, presumably without the rest of the party understanding the important trade implications of this.

This party, however, will stand for free trade in Canada. We will see that the federal government's role is always to make sure that all products can move freely across this country. We will not accept the recent word from the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool that somehow it would be fine to let the Canadian Wheat Board, on behalf on the prairie farmers, do whatever it likes in relation to grain, do whatever it likes in terms of pricing in other parts of the country, that that would somehow be all right. Some steps have to be taken and we will take them. That is why I say to hon. members that the only fair and reasonable thing to do is to wait until they see the policy in all its aspects before they become excited and criticize it.

We have had reference to telegrams. They are all based on rumours which do not fairly or adequately reflect the policies which we will be bringing down, and which we expect to come down with toward the end of July after we have final discussions with the various people who have asked for those discussions.

I must say a few words at least about the other part of the motion of the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar. I suspect that that part relating to protein and prices of food may have been added more to be persuasive about the emergency of the debate than to be an important part of the substance of the hon. member's speech. Certainly he passed it over very quickly.

[Mr. Lang.]