

Adjournment Debate

The hon. member for Egmont has spoken of a reversal of policy in the decision-making process for OFY. There is no reversal of policy. In previous years, when that program was the responsibility of another department, the funds were not allocated on a constituency basis. They will not be this year either. As my minister stated in his letter to hon. members on February 28, "the allocation of funds for the Opportunities for Youth program will be made on the basis of the 33 labour market areas in Canada, which in most cases cover several constituencies."

Since the funds for OFY are not allocated on a constituency basis, it would be difficult to form constituency advisory groups. However, in the consultation process, when we ask the advice of hon. members we would hope that their views would reflect their own consultation with local agencies, community groups and civic officials. I want to reiterate that consultation will take place widely and that we depend on it for the success of the program. We appreciate the constant interest of the hon. member and the interest we hope all hon. members will show as projects are being considered.

With particular reference to Prince Edward Island, there was one project officer in Charlottetown until the end of January. Another has since been hired. In the meantime, a fully briefed secretary, experienced in the OFY program, was in charge of the office. She was able to personally assist almost all who requested her advice. In the rare cases where she was unable to help, she either contacted the regional office herself or encouraged the applicant to call Halifax collect where help and advice were given. Information on the program was sent to schools, libraries, Canada Manpower centres and student manpower centres at universities. Thus, I am able to assure you, Mr. Speaker, that prospective applicants in Prince Edward Island received no less aid than their counterparts in other provinces.

In view of the alarmist statements the hon. member has made about the program, it would seem to me that perhaps it is the hon. member himself who is trying to torpedo it.

GRAIN—FEED GRAIN—POLICY RESPECTING MARKETING

Mr. Elias Nesdoly (Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, on March 21 I asked the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, in view of the fact of the government's intention to throw domestic western farm feed grains totally on the open market, whether the government intended to modify its policy in light of the expressed request of the majority of farm organizations that the Canadian Wheat Board remain the sole marketing agency for western feed grains. The minister answered that a great many organizations expressed views on both sides of this question. However, I am convinced that the majority of western Canadian farmers want to retain the marketing authority of the Canadian Wheat Board with perhaps the single exception of the Palliser Wheat Growers.

It is clear that if the federal government adopts an open market policy position on feed grain, it will lend itself not only to an open market but to contracting and vertical integration. It is the last step in the process which members of the Canadian Feed Manufacturing Association have been working toward since 1960 when the then min-

[Mr. MacGuigan.]

ister of agriculture ordered the release of feed mills in western Canada from the control of the Canadian Wheat Board in respect of delivery quotas and therefore price.

● (2210)

One can expect all grain companies to become buyers and sellers of feed grains on a straight line contractual basis with different contracts covering different phases over the complete cycle of production to the consumer. The effect of this will be to bypass the so-called open market. Therefore, an open market is not the real target. Contracting and vertical integration is the real objective of the federal government's policy—the grain trade, feed manufacturers, integrators and the vested interests who understand and support those objectives. If the basis of these assumptions is correct, clearly the emerging process will have profound effects upon future production, the basis upon which production takes place and where it takes place in Canada.

As the integration process evolves, grain producers producing under contract will be integrated, livestock producers producing under a feed contract will be integrated, and livestock production will be integrated with the processor and retailer to complete the cycle. Those who in the short run function in the agricultural market economy will in the long run become part of the industrial planning system or perish.

For those farmers who are now producing grain and livestock or poultry on their own farms, it means as the industrial planning system extends its control over all sectors of production that those farmers will be forced to join the planning sector, subsidize the planning sector or lose money in production. It makes little difference how they are affected; they will become completely dominated by the planning sector or go bankrupt. In the long run they will be eliminated, for the planning sector, being dominant, will determine the allocation of resources within the system and therefore the location and nature of production.

Therefore, I urge that in the best interest of western and eastern farmers, the Canadian Wheat Board remain or become the sole marketing agency for western feed grains domestically, both intra- and interprovincially, and that the Canadian Livestock Feed Board become the sole purchasing and selling agency for feed grains domestically beyond the Canadian Wheat Board's designated area at points of transfer, Thunder Bay and Vancouver. This policy should include guaranteed minimum prices, a permanent storage program under Canadian Wheat Board jurisdiction, improved price monitoring information systems, freight rate equality in livestock and grain, and farmer consultation.

The minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board had a plebiscite on rapeseed marketing and on acreage payments on two-price wheat. Why not a plebiscite for all feed grain growers to determine their wishes, or is the minister not calling one because he knows what the results will be? Is he not calling one because he knows that the Conservative Party is fully behind him on this issue?