

Farm Machinery

Mr. Horner (Acadia): As soon as the minister is through, will he permit a question on this point?

Mr. Hays: If hon. members will refer to the Farm Credit Act they will note that parliament did not consider it necessary to define in detail in that act the items which might be considered to be farm machinery. Parliament in its wisdom recognized the necessity of providing a measure of flexibility in the definition by permitting it to be broadened from time to time by regulation, without the necessity of amendment to the act itself. I would like to assure hon. members, however, that it is the intention of the government, for the purposes of this act, to have farm machinery defined as broadly as possible so that it may include any item of machinery that a farmer can use in the development or operation of his farm unit. Farmers themselves know what they need and we want to be in the position to meet these needs.

Many hon. members have asked questions as to what sort of machinery might be purchased under this legislation. Several speakers have suggested items which they think should be considered. The hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Olson) has referred to tillage and harvesting equipment, including types of equipment, for specialized crops such as sugar beets. He has referred also to the need for heavy equipment which could break the prairie, prepare a seed bed and seed tame grass in some of the submarginal land.

Even the hon. member for Rosthern (Mr. Nasserden), while describing this legislation as useless and foolhardy was able to see how useful it could be in the co-operative purchase and use of grain handling and grain cleaning equipment. He said this at page 8065 of *Hansard*. The big brother of the hon. member for Acadia (Mr. Horner), the hon. member for Jasper-Edson (Mr. Horner), was also able to see the usefulness of this legislation by suggesting it could be employed in the purchase of land levellers, caterpillar tractors, feeding and grinding equipment and land clearing equipment. And even the little brother, the hon. member for Acadia, while fussing and fuming about this legislation as only he can fuss and fume, saw this legislation's usefulness in the purchase of brush clearing equipment, large grass seeding equipment, portable grain mills and grain driers, portable grain cleaning equipment and seed cleaning equipment. In the speech he made before we were treated to the agricultural wisdom of the right hon. Leader of the Opposition, he even indicated that he would

[Mr. Hays.]

like syndicates to be able to purchase their own pipe for watering livestock.

Mr. Speaker, as unworthy as I think some of the remarks of these hon. members were, I want to be fair and say that these are worthy suggestions, and in spite of their sources I can assure hon. members that the definition of farm machinery to be approved by the governor in council with respect to this legislation will provide for all these items. The hon. member for Kent (Ont.) (Mr. Danforth) has asked who will decide the type and make of machinery which will be bought. I can assure hon. members that as long as the type of machinery under consideration can be used in the development or operation of a farming enterprise and can be used co-operatively by the members of the syndicate, it will be the members of the syndicate themselves who will make this decision. As an example, take three farmers in the black soil zone of Saskatchewan, each with a half section grain-livestock farm with about 200 crop acres under cultivation. Farm management studies indicate that the investment of these farmers in a used swather and pull-type combine amounts to about \$3,200, or \$16 per crop acre. These three farmers might form a syndicate and purchase a good used swather and combine of a larger capacity for about \$5,000, with a down payment of about \$350 each. Their capital investment would be just over \$8 per acre, or about half of their present investment. They could have a very efficient three-man harvesting operation with ample capacity to handle their 600 crop acres with a very substantial saving in investment and depreciation costs to each farmer, and by operating together might very easily avoid the need for hired labour at harvest time.

The same principle applies as well, or better, in eastern Canada. Dairy farmers in Quebec, for example, have much of their land in pasture and forage crops and might have only 25 to 30 acres in grain. It would not pay to buy a combine for such a small area. Three or four such farmers could join together and purchase a new eight-foot pull-type combine for about \$5,000 with a down payment of about \$1,000.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): An eight-foot combine? That must be wrong.

Mr. Hays: In this way, with an initial investment of \$250 to \$350 each they would have a combine which would quite easily handle all their work, and possibly do some for their neighbours on a custom basis. They would have effected a real saving in interest and depreciation costs. They could also co-