

Canadians have every reason to greet the future with great confidence.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I am a little confused because the body of the Member's speech dealt with the litany, indeed, the travesty of the situation currently facing Canadian farmers. Yet, the Member is defending the Government's record by saying that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) made a three or four paragraph reference to this in the Throne Speech. On the one hand the Member lauds the Government's bilateral talks. On the other hand I assume that he does not support supply management which is the position of the Canadian Wheat Board as it relates to the sale of wheat, not only in Canada but abroad. Could the Member specify what his position is on supply management?

Second, does he feel that it is an absolute coincidence that following a 5.30 a.m. call from Grant Devine the Prime Minister finally came onside last Friday, when it happens that there is going to be an election in Saskatchewan? There are those cynics among us who felt that the PGRT announcement in Alberta was linked to the Alberta election and those among us who feel that the announcement made by the Prime Minister with respect to the supposed \$1 billion fund, the details of which have not yet been worked out, was more related to the Saskatchewan election than to the Throne Speech.

Mr. White: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. I can see why she would be somewhat confused. The Canadian Wheat Board is not considered supply management. It has been very beneficial to the farmers, but it is definitely not supply management.

I am very pleased that the Member mentioned the accusation that the announcement on the farm aid package was in response to the Saskatchewan election. I believe that any help for western agriculture must involve the provinces, and Saskatchewan has been a leading proponent of support for agriculture. I compare that to the platitudes which have come from the Manitoba Government, with absolutely no help. The idea of help for farmers in Manitoba has been an indication that farmers there owe more money to the Government. That is the only thing which has been done. I am pleased that the Government of Saskatchewan has followed its words with action. Ontario has school tax relief for farm land which Manitoba could easily implement. We speak about Saskatchewan for good reason. It has done a great deal for the farmers of western Canada.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, the Member avoided my first question. Does he or does he not support supply management with respect to Canadian agricultural produce?

Mr. White: Mr. Speaker, I support organizations like the Canadian Wheat Board. I think it is too simplistic a view of Canadian agriculture to make a blunt statement that you support supply management. There is much more to it than that.

The Address—Mr. White

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I also listened very carefully to the Member's speech and I thank him for laying out some of the specific problems of the Canadian farm producer these days. I have three questions for the Member, all of which are related. He made reference to the agricultural assistance program which the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) introduced the other day in his speech on the Address in Reply to the Throne Speech. This assistance program will consist of up to \$1 billion. Is this the long awaited deficiency payment that the Government has been promising? Is this new money? In other words, will this \$1 billion be in addition to the moneys already involved in a variety of agricultural support packages? Is this for western Canada or for all of Canada? Durum wheat growers in parts of Canada other than western Canada are also experiencing serious difficulties.

Mr. White: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for his question. As I mentioned in my presentation, the assistance package announced on Friday was important in that it was an indication to western farmers that help is on the way. It is also important to note that consultations will be had with the provinces. I believe that help for western agriculture must be a federal-provincial matter. With regard to it being a deficiency payment, that may be the wrong wording for it. I have been unable to find a consensus within the farm community of the best way to bring forward the assistance. I think it is far better to announce that the assistance is on the way, to bring confidence back into the farming community, then to sit down with the provinces and farm organizations in order to try to discover which is the best program for the benefit of western farmers.

Mr. Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to commend my colleague, the Member for Dauphin—Swan River (Mr. White) on his very excellent presentation. He comes, as I do, from a constituency which is largely agricultural. From that perspective I certainly have great interest in his remarks. I was reminded very much of the Prince Albert declaration put forward by our Party in July of 1984 which laid out a framework for the future and gave some hope, for the first time in a generation, to western Canada. Coming from that Prince Albert declaration was the promise that the west would be brought back into Confederation. Over the past couple of years a great many initiatives have been undertaken by the Government in order to assist in bringing about the reunification of the country.

We are entering into a new era of co-operation rather than confrontation. The other day the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said that farmers expect the Government to sell their grain and he said "By God, we are going to do it". Contrast that with the words of a previous Prime Minister who went out to western Canada and said to the farmers "Why should I sell your wheat?" I think that is the essence of the whole thing. It is a case of co-operation versus confrontation.

Could the Hon. Member expand on something for me? He mentioned very briefly that one of the major announcements of