

Farm Credit Act

have been repeated in the House and as Quebecers we must show more objectivity.

I am one of those who have relentlessly defended Quebec's interests in this House but I am willing to recognize what the federal government has done for the province of Quebec.

In the field of agriculture, I think that the federal government has offered serious co-operation. And when the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean (Mr. Lessard) blamed the Quebec minister of agriculture for saying that the federal presence carries much weight in Quebec, I wonder how right Mr. Toupin was. And I am tempted to concur with the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean who is very familiar with the role fulfilled by the federal government in agriculture.

As a member of the Committee on Agriculture, I have had the opportunity of meeting the Quebec agriculture minister. We were able to ask him a few questions—short ones, because he was very busy. On the other hand the Ontario Minister of Agriculture granted us two days, which was very much appreciated.

As for the statements of the Quebec Minister of Agriculture, I am not endorsing them, far from it. In my opinion, the members of the Committee on Agriculture did a very good job defending the agriculture policy in connection with Quebec.

Of course, as many others, I deplored the \$10 million reduction of the grants to the dairy industry made two or three years ago. But upon analysis, we must admit that generally speaking the dairy producers are really in a better position than three years ago and I must therefore admit that, even if this measure was wrong, it was probably necessary as proven by results which we must accept objectively. The farm consolidation program deserves the attention of all hon. members. I have had the opportunity of asking the minister whether he will maintain his national policy; he replied that he was decided to consider the problems and the wishes of the provinces. This reply is most interesting and demonstrates that the minister is prepared to respect the wishes of the provinces as to the consolidation of small farms.

Surely we must support the conservation of the family farms and also admit that a certain number of acres is absolutely necessary for a man to make a living. But we must accept the elimination of a number of producers and farmers.

To let people believe that with 10, 15 or 25 acres they can still make a living is to have the producers dreaming while we are perfectly aware that with the current changes it is impossible to live on a limited acreage as farmers did 30 or 40 years ago.

But between really going in for industrial agriculture and choosing appropriate standards for a man to live on a well-organized family farm, I think it is the government's responsibility to offer those farmers all the necessary means to keep their family farms, in order that their children may continue the operations which supported their parents. Even as a result of serious changes and with the facilities available under Bill C-5, it would be unfortunate to believe that a loan or farm credit policy alone is the ultimate answer.

[Mr. La Salle.]

It is a fact that credit is needed. Everybody knows that. However, what is actually needed is a policy which would guarantee adequate basic prices so that farmers may make a profit. This profit could serve as an incentive for their children to remain on the land and work it after their parents have departed. This is the only way to improve agriculture, to encourage young Canadian farmers to follow in their fathers' footsteps.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, it being five o'clock, I hope that this bill will bring about the results expected, and that this government will continue to propose policies likely to improve the lot of producers in all parts of Canada.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Order, please. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Regina East (Mr. Burton)—Manpower—Local initiatives program—Funds allocated, amounts spent, applications received, by provinces; the hon. member for Saint John-Lancaster (Mr. Bell)—Fisheries—Atlantic Salmon Fishery Closure—Reason for omission of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Quebec rivers; the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Skoberg)—Transport—Proposed linking of Kootenay and Elk railway to U.S. line—Request for action to prevent movement of coal to U.S. ports.

[English]

It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely public bills, private bills and notices of motions.

• (1700)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY ACT

AMENDMENT CONCERNING SEAT BELTS IN COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

Mr. Barry Mather (Surrey-White Rock) moved that Bill C-17, to amend the Motor Vehicle Safety Act (seat belts), be read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to amend the Motor Vehicle Safety Act in such a way as to add to public safety on our streets, roads and highways in Canada by including the proposed change which would require in the case of all commercial vehicles, notably trucks and buses, that the equipment, safety restraint seat belts, be mandatory and further that the use of such seat