

That is a very difficult issue to deal with, principally because the minute the program can be top-loaded by anyone, we are right back at the point where we started where individual provinces could compete against each other for subsidies. The net effect would be to lower the prices and bring back the whole issue to where we started. I am sure the Parliamentary Secretary is very much aware of this issue and has given it some thought, as has the Minister.

We must do other things in addition to this Bill in order to provide good price stabilization to our agricultural industry. The Parliamentary Secretary referred to that issue during the latter part of his remarks, and rightfully so. There are issues now on which the agricultural industry needs answers, and very clear answers, from this Government in order to have any kind of stability in agricultural commodity pricing.

We need to know what has been done by this Government with regard to the United States countervail. That countervail duty of 5.3 cents a pound, as I understand it, has had a devastating effect on the price of pork in Canada. More particularly, it has had tragic effects in the riding that I represent. Pork producers need assurance that this Government is doing its job.

Not long ago the Leader of the Government said in Quebec City that the President of the United States is as close to him as the phone, that he could reach him at any time and discuss issues which affect our country. We have an example here with this countervail duty. We have asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) on several occasions whether he has telephoned the President of the United States. Has he contacted U.S. authorities to ensure that this countervail duty will not adversely affect our producers? We know the answer from the mere fact that the countervail was imposed. It is having a terrible effect. It has completely depressed prices. Representing an agricultural area, Mr. Speaker, as does the Minister of Public Works (Mr. La Salle), who is quite notorious for his discussion with farmers, you will undoubtedly be aware of all this.

[Translation]

Because the Minister of Public Works (Mr. La Salle) is quite famous for his conversations with farmers. For instance, I read here: "Quebec hog producers want Roch La Salle to fulfil his commitments". We are aware that if he is very much interested in agriculture, although he may not be very anxious to fulfil his commitments. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Supply and Services—I should say the Minister of Public Works: because of their patronage tendencies, I am inclined to mix them up. The Minister of Public Works is very much interested in agriculture, and Quebec hog producers are certainly anxious to get their cheques. Moreover, Quebec and Eastern Ontario hog producers—

Mr. La Salle: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Minister of Public Works on a point of order.

Agricultural Stabilization Act

Mr. La Salle: I realize that the Hon. Member was not here last year, but he should know, first, that his Government had refused any assistance to pork producers. Second, as concerns the subsidy to pork producers, the Hon. Member should know that we have a problem—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I do not believe that this is a point of order. The Hon. Member for Glengarry-Pre-scott-Russell.

Mr. Boudria: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You are quite right, it is not a point of order, and it is not even a good point because, as we all know, the point is that the Minister himself made some commitments and did not meet them. That is the point.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister was right, however, when he said that there were problems between Canada and the United States, but as the Prime Minister himself has said, he is just a phone call away from Washington. All he has to do is to take the phone and the solution will be instantaneous. Just add water and the solution will be there. What is the answer to help pork producers? Is it to charge an artificial customs duty of 5.3 cents a pound for Canadian pork? That is not the answer.

Mr. Blais: Do you have the answer?

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to know that the Parliamentary Secretary has finally admitted that his Prime Minister does not have an answer. When he told the Canadian people that he had answers following the Quebec Conference, it was not true and I am glad to know it. I hope that the Parliamentary Secretary will at least have the courage to tell his Prime Minister that he was wrong and that, next time, he should tell the truth. I am happy at the present attitude of the Parliamentary Secretary and I congratulate him on his courage, Mr. Speaker. I trust that he will be able to show the same attitude when he meets the Prime Minister. Mr. Speaker, it is good to see at least one Progressive Conservative Member with such courage.

[English]

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture recently sent to Members of Parliament its annual revised edition of its policy manual. It brings to the concern of legislators, federal and provincial in the Province of Ontario, issues which affect the agriculture industry in general. It indicates how we need price stabilization in Canada. I wish to read briefly from the manual. I quote:

Stabilization programs must provide enough security to encourage farmers to make long-term management decisions. A good stabilization plan is forward-looking; gives timely signals of the desired level of production;—

In terms of production, we are not addressing this issue now. I see that we are nearing one o'clock. Perhaps I should continue later this afternoon briefly with the rest of my remarks.