

Agriculture

heavier losses than they did during the time of foot and mouth disease.

Let us look at the Maritimes. There are lush pastures in the Maritimes just waiting for the development of vast herds of cattle. But does Ottawa give Canadian would-be cattlemen any incentive to develop the cattle industry in the Maritimes? I suggest it does not. No wonder the Liberals find it difficult to elect members in the Maritimes. Maritimers like to use their initiative and they like to be given incentives. I am convinced that the Liberals are against free enterprise and against "get up and go" initiative. Our party is in favour of this; and we are all for the farmer, for the cattleman and for the consumer. When it comes to marketing, farmers are willing to take the lows if they also have the advantage of the highs. They want realistic floor prices, not unrealistic ceilings. They want to be given the chance to produce as much good quality produce as possible, and to avoid shortages. They believe the consumer also wants this.

When I look at the frustrations borne by the consumer, the farmer and the cattleman today, I begin to wonder about this government. I have come to many conclusions, but being a man of some forgiveness, a man with some kindness in his heart, may I leave hon. members, as I look across the House at those who have put agriculture and the Canadian consumer in the position they occupy today, with one sobering thought. To the House and to the Canadian public, I say of the Liberal members: Forgive them, for they know not what they do.

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, there have been further discussions to those which occurred earlier, and I believe there is agreement now that we not have the "late show" this evening but that the debate on this subject matter should continue until 10.30.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the suggestion of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang). Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Mr. Marcel Roy (Laval): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to bring my humble contribution to this debate on the motion brought forward by the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner), in the opposition, which reads as follows:

This House deplores the government's inability to give leadership in developing and implementing comprehensive and co-ordinated agricultural policies and programs and regrets that by ill-advised and *ad hoc* remedies the government has weakened the overall agricultural economy.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard the mover and other hon. members in the official opposition put forward their cases. I have really wondered whether we had looked up the same statistics because we know very well, as do indeed hon. members in the opposition, the situation which prevails in the agricultural area.

One only needs to refer to the statistics of 1972 and 1971 to see that there is an increase of 17 per cent, an additional revenue of 17 per cent, Mr. Speaker. But what is even more encouraging is that if we consider the figures published by Statistics Canada, we see that the revenue from farming between January and August 1973 are estimated at \$4,020,000,000 as compared with \$3,146,000,000 for the correspond-

[Mr. Hurlburt.]

ing period in 1972. Therefore, I wonder whether opposition members have access to the same statistics or whether they are trying to juggle figures in another attempt to play politics on the back of farmers. We wonder whether we are still in the same country when we see the official figures that are published and that some people have the guts to introduce such motions when one is aware of the economic situation that prevails in the area of agriculture. In view of this situation, Mr. Speaker, I feel that I could not remain seated in my chair, because I have heard the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) say the same things since 1968. It is always the same record, always the same tape: he is trying to give a gloomy view of the agricultural situation. One could even call the record of the hon. member for Crowfoot as follows: How to discourage Canadian farmers in order to reduce their number to better serve one's own interests. I feel that this is the situation but, happily, farmers do not listen too much to the hon. member for Crowfoot in view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that between 1966 and 1971, the number of farms that have chalked up a profit of \$10,000 or more has considerably increased.

Therefore, one can see that the agricultural situation is not quite as outlined by the hon. member for Crowfoot.

Since 1968, Mr. Speaker, I have heard the same criticism. I am led to ask myself questions about the following matters: So far as the hon. member for Crowfoot, the hon. member for Lisgar (Mr. Murta) and the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Gleave) are concerned, what interests do they want to serve in this House? Are they conscious of their role as legislators at the service of agriculture in Canada or do they want to play the role of a grain or beef producer who wants to sell his own production to the Canadian Wheat Board? I might wonder about the aims of those hon. members when they try to make us believe or suppose that agriculture is still in a discouraging situation. I wonder about the aims of such interventions and the aim the hon. member for Crowfoot pursues in introducing today a motion on the agricultural situation.

I would like it to be possible to further discuss that one day. I remember quite well when I was sitting on the agricultural committee that we passed a legislation dealing with amendments to the standards and classification of grains and there again during a year and a half the hon. member for Crowfoot objected systematically to the improvement of that very agricultural policy. We had another proof of that when we tried to do something being aware of the fact that the producer's income was not proportionate to the cost of production. When national legislation setting up marketing agencies was introduced again we had to listen to the wailing of the hon. member for Crowfoot and the opposition who once again systematically opposed that legislation.

And they say they will be the spokesmen for agriculture.

The mass of legislation passed by this government is so impressive that farmers know exactly who their real protector is. The figures I have quoted at the beginning of my remarks confirm how this situation is true.

In addition to all the acts already mentioned by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture