

Supply

make the Government listen to the promises enunciated by the Prime Minister before the election; to work with us to make the Government at least as sensitive to the plight of farmers as the Conservative Government in Saskatchewan; to work with us to make the Minister's voice heard more powerfully against those representatives of Bay Street like the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) and against those representatives of big business who frankly do not care about the small family farm; to fight with us in an attempt to get the Government to put into real priority what it put into verbal rhetoric when it sought the votes of farmers. If the Government does not act, constituencies and townships in all of Ontario that voted Conservative overwhelmingly just 13 months ago, will soon see hitting their territory the rural revolt which is so evident in my constituency. Within the last month and a half the National Farmers Union in Essex County has exploded into new life. Over 400 family members have signed up within the last 60 days. That thrust is sweeping across Ontario.

The petition which I presented to the House this morning was organized by that group of concerned farmers in Essex County. They have reached out across the Province of Ontario to all the cities, towns and communities that I enunciated when I presented my petition. They signed up thousands of people to protest the betrayal which the Government is seen as bringing to the rural parts of Ontario.

There is a threefold message that farmers are bringing to us. First, judicial debt review boards must be established to protect Canadian farmers. Second, they require urgent moves to try to get parity pricing for farm products. This is not something which is easy to do. It will require careful analysis. The House unanimously presented a Bill to the Standing Committee on Agriculture last April to explore that idea, and the Bill has sat there; nothing further has happened on it. The farmers in my county and the farmers with whom they talk right across Ontario are fed up. They want action and to be able to express their commitment to better prices for farm production. They do not want charity. They want fairness in the prices they receive. Finally, they want the trade strategy which the Government is trying to pursue with the United States to be turned into a trade strategy to protect Canadian farmers rather than leave them open to unfair competition from the United States. They feel—and I think they are absolutely right in saying it—that throwing ourselves completely open to the United States, with farm support levels there being much higher than here in Canada, will leave the Canadian farmer once more the victim of economic policy instead of its beneficiary. They want a trade strategy which gives us a fair shake in U.S. markets and gives us a chance to sell our products there without, each time we make a little progress, seeing that market swept away by unfair trade institutions in the United States.

I finish my remarks with a warning. The Opposition will continue to move motions asking for urgent action. However, if the Government fails to provide such action, it will reap its reward in the next election with a disastrous loss of constituencies right across Ontario, right across western Canada and I

believe right across Quebec. We expect that the fight being made in the House of Commons on behalf of Canadian farmers will lead to us being the spokespeople for farmers after the next election. We will be the people fighting for fairness for them. We will be the people fighting against the betrayal not only of the present Government but of the past Liberal Government, a betrayal which is badly hurting the future of our farm community.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Tardif (Richmond-Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased with this opportunity to express my views on the motion presented by our Leader.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I shall, if I may, take advantage of this opportunity to correct the question I put to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise), where I said that he stated before the Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs that the dairy policy would be released at the beginning of August. This should have been the Committee on Agriculture.

I shall now get back to the motion before the House. Mr. Speaker, it is truly amazing that every time a question is debated in this Chamber, no matter what the subject is or what opinion is being expressed or what the debate is about, we hear endlessly repeated: Listen, interest rates have dropped sharply, thanks to our efforts and our energetic policies. Inflation has stabilized, thanks to the measures we introduced.

And when the debate focusses on less joyous aspects and on very serious problems and situations, the blame and the responsibility are supposed to lie with the previous administration.

Yesterday, in this very same Chamber, we heard someone who, I think, is a real expert, inform us that it takes at least two years after the Budget is brought down before it can have any effect on unemployment or interest rates. This means that the present Government which has been in power for only thirteen months and which keeps saying, which keeps setting itself up as the initiator of all that is good and blaming us for what goes wrong—

I was surprised to hear the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) say earlier: Listen, after thirteen months in power, we have kept and acted on twelve promises out of fourteen. In his assessment, only two promises had not been kept.

● (1640)

A little later, his colleague mentioned that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) had 122 achievements to his credit, and all that in thirteen months. That is what this Government and its Ministers are telling us, that is what they would have us believe, Mr. Speaker. To me, all this is absolutely appalling and light-years removed from reality. To make my point, and to do so as eloquently and as incisively as possible, I would like to make use of what I feel best represents the interests of farmers, and especially in Quebec. I am, of course, referring to