

Agricultural Stabilization Act

He then said on page 13: "Given the hog surplus in the United States and elsewhere in the world, it is not the only solution.

● (1850)

There is another solution, and it may be to reduce our production, or in any case, attempt to do something along those lines. Whether it is federal stabilization or any other kind of stabilization, I have the feeling that if we continue to produce more and more, we will come to a dead end."

All this was said by Mr. Jacques Proulx, president of the UPA. In the same issue, we find similar comments by Mr. Scalabrini. I do not think that anyone can say that Mr. Scalabrini is not representative of his sector. He said the same thing.

After all these representations, Mr. Speaker, the very next week, on June 17, the Conservative Members of Parliament from Quebec asked for the support of the Federation of Quebec Pork Producers and asked Mr. Scalabrini, among others, to appear before the Standing Committee on Agriculture to help analyse possible amendments which would be acceptable in Quebec.

Following two full days of hearing on June 17 and 18 all Conservatives members, regular and substitute alike, sitting on our Standing Committee on Agriculture, together with Mr. Scalabrini and Mr. Pélerin, the new President of the Quebec Hog Producers Federation, tried to convince their committee colleagues and the Minister of the need for an amendment acceptable to Quebec. On Thursday morning, since the committee did not sit on Wednesday, we had made sure that the Farm Producers Union appeared once more before the committee to examine again with us a number of potential amendments, and on Thursday afternoon, the Minister of Agriculture moved an amendment which fully met one of the two requirements of the Quebec hog producers. And you can read all the testimonies.

That is just how effective the Quebec members of the Progressive Conservative Party can be! Contrary to what used to happen in years gone by under the previous government, they know how to present their views to the various committees, and to the House as well. This piece of legislation is quite good. What we have here is a framework legislation which will make it possible for the federal government to consult with the various provincial governments and hog producers organizations for the purpose of stabilizing the industry.

Mr. Speaker, hog producers . . . How long do I still have left, Mr. Speaker? Five seconds or five minutes? Five minutes. The hog producers in my riding are well aware that agriculture is a difficult industry. They know about the overproduction problem. They know that we produce more milk than we can use, more hogs than we can eat, and that we must export a large quantity of farm products. They know that our exports are no longer what they used to be. The countries which used

to buy from us have either improved their own agriculture, or they cannot afford any longer to do so. Mr. Speaker, the farm producers in my riding are aware of these problems. They are also aware of the need to find new solutions and develop a new approach. I do not think this new approach would be for hog producers to say: Let us limit our production to the needs of the domestic market, and let us forget about exporting to other countries. Quite the contrary. I feel that Canada must seek export markets and, to this aim, that the government should set up programs to promote our exports, provided that we develop a healthy and positive attitude, not a negative one.

Quebec hog producers have suggested that a meeting with all the other Canadian hog producers, the various organizations of hog producers in Canada might help devise a scheme to be submitted later to the Federal Government and the various provinces, a scheme that might help save this imperilled industry. It is not this bill which is likely to jeopardize in any way the hog industry in Canada, but the overproduction and the dissensions between hog producers.

And it is my feeling that sooner or later the Canadian pork producers will have to sit down together, and the Canadian Government can then join them in the talks because we will have provided a blanket legislation that will allow those talks.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions, comments. The Hon. Member for Shefford (Mr. Lapierre).

Mr. Lapierre: Mr. Speaker, I listened very closely to my hon. friend for Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead (Mr. Gérin), and I am sorry to tell him that he understood absolutely nothing about the stabilization program. He set out to prove that we needed the stabilization program to help exports, but the Minister can tell that the stabilization program is altogether worthless where exports are concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Hon. Member for Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead (Mr. Gérin) to clarify his view and tell me what impact the stabilization Bill now before us will have on the level of our exports, because if he read the Bill correctly, he knows it is strictly for domestic production.

The other point . . . when the Hon. Member for Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead—

Mr. Gérin: Mr. Speaker—

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order. I believe the Hon. Member would like to answer your first question.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérin: This is because basically, Mr. Speaker, he is merely asking questions for the fun of it, for the pleasure of hearing his own voice rather than wanting to get an answer.

Mr. Lapierre: Mr. Speaker—