

Supply—Agriculture

Before dealing with my subject this afternoon, I would like, first to congratulate the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Choquette) whose riding is next to mine and who has somewhat established the basis of my remarks this afternoon. However, I would like to answer a few points.

For example, when he stated that during the election campaign last year, the Liberal party promised to the province of Quebec an associate minister of agriculture, this is not what I read in the political platform of his party, it is not what the farmers heard and that is not what was on the order paper of the House of Commons last year when, from May 20 to the adjournment, there appeared a resolution providing for the creation of the office of minister of agriculture for eastern Canada. Some hon. members and ministers even stated that the minister of agriculture for eastern Canada would be on the same footing as the present Minister of Agriculture.

Moreover, I should like to point out to the house, as well as to the hon. member for Lotbinière, that what we gained with the new Liberal government was simply the loss of a parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Agriculture.

Last year or two years ago, we had a full time minister of agriculture, a minister of forestry, a parliamentary secretary to the minister of agriculture and another parliamentary secretary to the minister of agriculture.

At the present time, we only have one parliamentary secretary; he may be worth two men, but he represents only one riding in Canada. All we have gained with the new Liberal administration is the loss of a man representing the minister of agriculture and all the members in the House of Commons.

The hon. member for Lotbinière raised another point. He said that during the years the Conservative government was in power, carelessness, inefficiency and apathy prevailed. I would not like to dwell on that this afternoon, because I would spend 30 minutes and even more relating everything which was done by the Conservative government, from 1957 and 1962. However, I shall ask the hon. member for Lotbinière to refer to a speech which I made in this house on September 28, 1962, when I had the opportunity to do exactly what he did last year, that is second the address in reply to the speech from the throne.

Mr. Choquette: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. It is not exactly what I said.

[Mr. Vincent.]

On the contrary, here is what I said, and it will please the hon. member for Nicolet-Yamaska (Mr. Vincent). I said that the Liberal members had a tendency of accusing the Conservative government of inertia, inefficiency and negligence, and that the Conservatives, in turn, were accusing the Liberals of doing nothing.

Now, what I wanted to suggest is that we cease to accuse and blame one another; that we go hand in hand in order to establish an agricultural policy in Canada, and particularly in the province of Quebec. I am sure that all the members will agree on that.

Mr. Vincent: Mr. Chairman, I agree entirely with the remarks made by the hon. member for Lotbinière at this time, but I am somewhat disappointed to see that when the Conservatives were in office, those remarks could have been applied to the members sitting on this side of the house. I recall, for instance, that during the last election campaign they came and told Quebec farmers: "If you vote for the Conservatives, subsidies on milk and consumer goods will be stopped. All measures passed by the Conservatives themselves will be rescinded." The very opposite happened. The Conservatives are now in the opposition and the Liberals are in office. We see that subsidies on milk, lime and butter are disappearing gradually, and that is not done to help farmers, but to save money for the federal treasury.

Mr. Choquette: Would the hon. member permit me a question?

Mr. Vincent: Immediately after.

Mr. Choquette: Only one question?

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Nicolet-Yamaska has the floor.

Mr. Vincent: I should like, at this stage, to make a few comments on the remarks of the hon. member for Roberval. It is not my intention to take the government's defence, but when the hon. member for Roberval speaks about the farm credit corporation, I should not like him to create the impression that there is no farm credit for the farmers in the province of Quebec. He said that 2,500 loans had been granted in Saskatchewan by the farm credit corporation, while only 1,500 had been granted in the province of Quebec.

In the province of Quebec, we benefit from the provincial farm credit board that makes loans, or made loans at least at the time when another party was in power in the province, up to \$30 million a year.