

Perhaps this is a logical statement, but in a country with the agricultural producing potential of Canada surely we could have been insulated from the effects of this so-called international shortage. We have tremendous agricultural productive capacity in this country, but in the past five years there has been a planned and deliberate reduction of agricultural production which is part and parcel of the total philosophy of this government. They embarked upon a deliberate program of destruction of the small family farm; they embarked upon a program which discouraged production, which imposed controls and which left the agricultural economy in a confused and unstable state.

The Minister of Finance said today that this parliament had moved to save the family farm by removing the capital gains tax on interfamily transactions. But who instituted the capital gains tax, Mr. Speaker? Who imposed it upon the farmers of this country in the first place? Which political party in the last election proposed that the capital gains tax on family farm transactions should be abolished? It certainly was not those birds over there. The only reason they removed the capital gains tax on family farm transactions was the political revelation that occurred after the last election. But what have they done to help the small farmer during their tenure of office? We all remember what they did in 1968 when the then minister of agriculture removed the ceiling on the Farm Credit Corporation interest rate which was pegged at 5 per cent. It immediately shot up to 8 per cent and 8¾ per cent.

What have they done to encourage young farmers to engage or remain in agriculture? Their programs have discouraged, rather than encouraged. We hear now that there is to be a conference of the agricultural ministers of all the provinces in order to consider ways and means to encourage production. I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that had it not been for this Liberal government, with its idiotic agricultural policies, we would not need this conference. Theirs was a policy of destruction; it destroyed the heart and soul of the family farm. They were dedicated to a program of production controls and supply management, and controls upon controls.

We heard the Minister of Agriculture say this afternoon that we are in a period of instability and uncertainty. You bet we are. We have been in that state since the Trudeau administration took office in 1968. From the days when this government instituted its proposals on tax reform there has been instability and uncertainty not only in agriculture but in all industry across the country. There has been instability in agriculture since Lift, Bill C-176 and the stabilization bill were brought forth.

This government is now coming around to realizing the importance of the agricultural industry because food prices have risen very sharply. Where were they when the price of hogs was around \$29. What did they do then when farmers went bankrupt because of the low price? They came out a year later with a subsidy on a certain grade of hogs. Where were they when eggs were selling at 12 cents a dozen?

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I have before me a grading statement from a farmer who sold 240 dozen eggs to Cal-Ed Poultry Farms Limited. His

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total receipts were \$44.82. He received 12 cents a dozen for grade B eggs. Where were government members when there was talk about increasing and encouraging production? That was the time the government could have moved in with reasonable support programs to keep the farmers in production. Today, production does not exist because, by the deliberate actions and policies of this government, the farmers have been forced off the land.

Where were they when the Canadian Dairy Commission was allowed to discriminate and deliberately take away the quotas from our small dairy farmers? Where are they now? Where were they when we had stockpiles of wheat and it was selling at 90 cents a bushel? What was the government doing then? It was not doing anything. The last report of the Canadian Wheat Board will indicate that farmers realized the lowest price in 12 years for the grain they sold. It was something like \$1.59 a bushel. We all know the government is trying to impose a freeze on agricultural products that are being sold. They have manipulated the domestic price of wheat.

An hon. Member: You asked for a freeze.

Mr. Mazankowski: We asked for a complete freeze, right across the board. You are embarking on a program of selective controls aimed at the defenceless farmer. You are imposing a freeze on the domestic price of wheat. You have manipulated the beef and hog industry by your silly export restrictions.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member has about two minutes left. He should use this time to address the Chair.

Mr. Mazankowski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to refer to a statement made today by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) in which he slammed the professors and economists of this country. Where was the Minister of Agriculture when his government was adopting the policies of the task force report on agriculture which was written by no less than five professors and economists, none of whom was a farmer, and which forms the Liberal bible on agricultural policy? This minister has taken a lot of credit for the increase in price of agricultural products. However, he should not be too glowing about the way his predecessor, who was defeated by the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Hargrave), took the heart and soul out of the farmer in all parts of this country. The minister should be grateful to the Conservative party because if it were not for this party, he would not be occupying that position today.

Inflation is one of the major issues threatening our economic and social fabric. Inflation has eroded our dollar by more than one third since 1961. We must consider the fact that the chairman of the Economic Council of Canada has suggested we will probably be going through a period when inflation will be of the order of 5 to 6 per cent. This means the dollar will be worth something in the area of 75 cents; in 5 years, 56 cents; in 10 years, 42 cents and in 15 years, 31 cents. This is a terrorizing thought. What does this government intend to do about it?

This government has suggested that one of its major priorities is the pursuit of reasonable price stability. We must question the sincerity of that statement because this