

It was during the first session of the Parliament of Canada previous to this one that a subcommittee of the House tabled its well-known report, copies of which are still in great demand. That report is called "Still Waters: The Chilling Reality of Acid Rain".

One of its recommendations called for Canada and the United States to reach an agreement on the necessary legislation and mechanisms to substantially reduce transboundary air pollution as it relates to acid rain. It recommended that something be done by the end of 1982.

In this respect I want to take my stand, not for or against a Government, but with an all-party parliamentary group that understood the problem well enough to make a recommendation as forthright and vigorous as that. It reminds me once again that Parliament does have a role to play in leading Government rather than following it, cheering or jeering, as the case may be. If more parliamentary reports were adhered to and taken seriously, the kind of action taken by governments would not be so open to criticism or challenge by the people of Canada.

I am delighted that the new rules we recently adopted will finally give Members of Parliament the opportunity not simply to follow, but to take the lead on certain crucial issues such as the issue of acid rain that we are debating today. It enables us to debate how we may encourage the people in the United States to convince their Government, their Congress and their administration to do a great deal more than they have in the past.

We know that the result of the recent meeting between our Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the President of the United States was no big deal. That is not just my opinion, because the Prime Minister himself said in the House that the agreement on acid rain was not a triumph, but represented progress. That is what we are debating today.

How much progress was made? I am not interested in the historical debate about whether it is more progress than was made in the past. I am more interested in the problems we face today and the damage that acid rain is causing in my region of the country. I suggest that an agreement which simply calls for more research but no real cuts in the level of sulphuric and nitric oxide emissions is not enough. It is certainly no triumph. It is certainly no big deal to recognize that acid rain is a problem and perhaps some money will be spent on it. That money will be spent if Congress agrees, and it is no easier to get money from Congress than it is to get money for new programs from our Government when we are facing a serious fiscal situation. May I call it one o'clock?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order. I am sorry to interrupt the Hon. Member.

[Translation]

Order, please. It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until 2 p.m.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

S.O. 21

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

AGRICULTURE

CALL FOR STABILIZATION PAYMENTS TO PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FARMERS

Mr. George Henderson (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) is not acting wisely regarding stabilization payments for Prince Edward Island potato farmers. Island farmers fear the auctioneer will be long gone by the time the Government gets around to helping them out. Far too many farmers are on the brink of bankruptcy.

Farmers asked for help last fall. Here it is very close to spring planting season and there is still no word. Island potato farmers need cash in their pockets to pay last year's bills before they can start planning for the coming season. They need an assurance that help is on the way.

I call upon the Government to exercise wise judgment and approve funds for stabilization payments immediately. That is not all. The market price for potatoes must be restored to reasonable levels. To do that, the Government must also approve a diversion program to remove potatoes from the market. Our primary producers must be guaranteed a healthy return for their crops, and stabilization payments to cover their losses.

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INDUSTRY

FLEET INDUSTRIES—QUALITY OF PRODUCTS

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, early in January I was contacted by an individual who had been a quality assurance supervisor at Fleet Industries, a company which makes aircraft and other military components. He told me many horror stories about unqualified personnel and improper inspection procedures at its plant, so I pressed both the Department of Transport and the Department of National Defence to investigate.

These investigations have now been completed and it is apparent that their findings, as far as they went, have substantiated the allegations which were made by this individual. It is to be hoped that the company and these two Departments will now move quickly to correct the problems and guarantee the quality and safety of their products.

If these matters had not been raised by this individual, how much longer would they have gone unnoticed by the DND on-site inspectors, and the Department of Transport audits which had failed to notice them in the past? There is some-