

think the rural population of Canada will judge him accordingly when there is another election.

[Translation]

**Mr. Léopold Corriveau (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I think it is my duty at this stage to try and explain a few things to the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier). He referred to statistics a moment ago, and I feel that these figures go back to 1914 or that he is absolutely not aware of farm credits of the federal government. I would like to quote figures and I will be pleased to give him afterwards the documents where they come from.

On January 12, 1973, long-term mortgage loans granted by the Farm Credit Corporation were distributed in the following way: British Columbia got 175 loans for an amount of \$8,300,000; Alberta received 788 loans for an amount of \$27,436,000; Saskatchewan got 1,590 loans for an amount of \$51,139,000; Manitoba received 425 loans for an amount of \$13,398,000; and Ontario got 1,128 loans for an amount of \$41,613,000.

May I draw the hon. member's attention on the fact that the province of Quebec received 666 loans for an amount of \$21,232,000, an increase of 44.2 per cent for the first nine months of the year. I would like to quote more recent figures, that is to say those of April 9. I would like to repeat the same things about other provinces, for people will be able to see the difference.

Quebec received 862 loans for \$21,968,000, an increase of 48 per cent over last year.

Mr. Speaker, I thought it was my duty to quote these statistics and if the hon. member for Roberval wants to check them I will be pleased to give them to him. These are official statistics.

● (1640)

Mr. Speaker, the federal government has drawn up a number of programs to subsidize agriculture which have greatly contributed to make foodstuffs as cheap as they are today in Canada. I do not intend to name them all but allow me to simply give a few examples.

The government of Canada was the first to set up an agricultural food research institute, a fact that is too often taken for granted in this country. Research enabled our farmers to stay at the top not only in terms of production but also in terms of quality. The research stations represent only part of the overall research effort. The Farm Credit Corporation has become the main long term source of financing for the improvement and development of agriculture. The federal-provincial agreements under ARDA were the most important individual programs designed to update and improve the structure of rural communities and agriculture in many areas.

The federal-provincial crop insurance programs have helped to offset crop risks. The government brought in amendments to this act in order to increase its contribution to the premiums from 25 to 50 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture introduced Bill C-129, an Act to amend the Crop Insurance Act, which received royal assent in September. It provides for a new method of sharing the costs of crop insurance between the

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federal and provincial governments, so that the farmers of every province will now only pay 50 per cent of the required premiums.

Several reasons prompted the government to introduce that bill. First, it wanted to make premium costs uniform for all Canadian farmers. Now, thanks to our proposal, farmers will all pay the same premiums and the federal government contribution to the program will be more equitable. It wanted also to urge the provinces to increase their efforts to make the program readily available to all farmers. Thanks to our proposal, as the provinces share of crop insurance costs increases, the cost to the federal government will increase faster than that of the provinces.

For its part, the federal government has taken the necessary steps to help the farm industry build itself a better and more secure future.

We have raised taxes on capital gains on the transfer of farms from one generation to the next. This is a great advantage for family farms which are the best type of operations we have in Canada.

We have proposed amendments to the Crop Insurance Act in order to help farmers offset losses of income because of ruined crops.

Through the Small Farm Development Program, we have helped Canadian farmers make their family farm operations more profitable.

We have raised the ceiling of farm loans granted by the Farm Credit Corporation and the Senate has approved the increase of the ceiling on loans granted under the Farm Improvement Loans Act.

We have also passed a measure to enable the farmers to set up national marketing boards. A well managed agency will benefit the producers as well as the consumers by ensuring more stability and more efficiency in marketing.

The farmers have set up for themselves one of the most efficient production systems in the world.

The Canadian government has also helped the farmers to establish their own marketing systems.

The farmers own a large part of the wheat handling and storing facilities in western Canada, and they also own one of the most important milk processing plants, the most modern and most efficient in all Canada.

They have set up about 120 provincial marketing agencies and this year, the first national marketing board for eggs, and they are discussing the establishment on a national basis of the marketing of poultry.

Farmers have taken the initiative in Canada and, without any substantial grant or excessive import control, they have set up modern, effective and competitive marketing procedures.

The Department of Agriculture is granting loans to farmers for the improvement and development of their operations.

In the small farms consolidation legislation, we offer special assistance to farmers who decide to leave the farm, either to retire or to take another type of employment. There are also federal-provincial special assistance programs for farmers in certain areas.