

Supply

Good common sense prevails now, at least on the Liberal side. We have chosen to head towards better control of the deficit and we are on the right track. We made some tough choices in order to save our social programs, our social security and our standard of living.

The impact of the 1995 budget will be no greater for Quebec's agricultural sector than for any other province or sector. I would like to adopt a slightly different approach here and explain what exactly is the importance of Quebec's agricultural sector within the Canadian agricultural and agri-food sector as a whole.

The latest data on agriculture in Quebec are very impressive and show a very dynamic, sustainable and promising sector. For example, the agri-food industry generates 5 per cent of the Quebec GDP and 4 per cent of all the jobs in Quebec, which is approximately 130 000 direct jobs.

The most important primary industry in Quebec is the agricultural and agri-food sector. It is first among the manufacturing industries.

• (1215)

As for the data comparing Quebec to the rest of Canada, the province of Quebec is doing very well. In fact, the Quebec agri-food industry accounts for 22.4 per cent of Canadian agri-food GDP and 25 per cent of manufacturing shipments. Moreover, 19 per cent of agricultural revenues, 37 per cent of the milk produced in Canada, including 47 per cent of industrial milk, also come from Quebec's agricultural sector.

If we add to these figures the fact that 33 per cent of Canadian exports of pork and 9.6 per cent of total Canadian exports are also from Quebec, it is obvious the province of Quebec has a very prominent place in the agricultural and agri-food industry in Canada.

Within the Department of Agriculture and Agri-food, it is a well-known fact that the success of the agricultural sector is due mainly to the efforts made by all the stakeholders.

However, no one can deny the contribution made by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada in many initiatives aimed at, first, ensuring the viability of agriculture and the prosperity of the agri-food industry; second, ensuring long-term financial security; third, promoting growth and diversification, as well as employment in the rural areas; fourth, ensuring the viability of the resources and protecting the environment; and fifth, maintaining a supply of top-quality wholesome foods.

It is to be noted, among other things, that the interests of the Quebec agri-food industry were very well represented by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada in international trade and in the

discussions on the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement or NAFTA which followed and the GATT. Moreover, Quebec producers and processors have already begun to take advantage of the numerous opportunities and things should develop faster in this era of market globalization.

And what about the four research centres established in Quebec for the benefit of the Canadian agricultural community, the natural resource conservation programs and the participation of Agriculture and Agri-food Canada in initiatives aimed at reducing nonpoint source pollution, like Vision 2000.

I would like to remind members in the House that since joining the cabinet the current agriculture minister has always worked in close partnership with provinces, the private sector, educational institutions, farmers associations, processing sectors and Canadian producers as a whole.

Co-operation and consultation will continue. The agricultural sector will continue growing very rapidly in Quebec and in Canada. Constituents from Brome-Missisquoi are proud to have elected a Liberal member of Parliament who is ready to act in the interests of all farm producers, from Brome-Missisquoi as well as elsewhere. They chose to go with the dynamism, the transparency and the consultation I offered them as opposed to the consistent blocking by the Bloc. Only a flexible federalism will allow us to continue developing in a secure environment within Canada.

Dairy farmers, hog producers, grain producers, apple growers and others, the whole processing industry are and will go on experiencing great changes in the vast world of international trade.

Instead of griping, instead of blocking the interests of the farmers, let us help them.

Mr. Jean-Guy Chrétien (Frontenac, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I may remind you once again that in October 1993, Quebecers and Canadians opted for a change, but especially Quebecers.

Before 1984, there were 74 Liberal members in this House, similar to the member I just heard. Today, Mr. Speaker, there are at least 53 members of the Bloc Québécois who are prepared to rise in this House to condemn inequities. During the last election campaign to which the hon. member referred earlier, I followed him around for a few days, but he was always hidden away, while I was around his riding. I often went to L'Encan Lafaille et Fils.

• (1220)

I suggest the hon. member go and talk to the farmers next Monday, at L'Encan Lafaille in Coaticook, and ask them what they think of the Martin budget on agriculture. This guy does not have a clue about what is going on. He should go and talk to the UPA on Bourque Boulevard, just outside his riding, near Magog, and find out what the UPA in Sherbrooke has to say about the