

Agricultural Policies

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues and the minister in particular, for their courtesy.

In conclusion, so as to allow hon. members to go to lunch, I should like to deal with a subject which was discussed during the last electoral campaign in the province of Quebec. I have said on three occasions in this House—and I hope that my colleagues have understood that I did so in a good Canadian spirit—that dairy farmers have been penalized as the previous speaker said—so that they would get discouraged and would curtail their production, while in another part of the country—and I want to be well understood because I have no resentment towards western farmers—the government has established another farm policy. This dual policy leads us to division at the political and national level.

In the prairie provinces, in an effort to induce farmers to curtail their wheat production, the government has decided to grant them a compensation. I am not taking exception to the fact that these people will receive money to cut down their production, however I would like very much that the same approach be used towards milk producers with regular dairy cows. The farmers are expected to produce less Mr. Minister. I beg your pardon, Mr. Speaker, for addressing the minister directly. I know that this is not in order, but I would like so much the minister to finally understand my argument.

If, in order to curtail production, a subsidy is granted to take the land out of production, why not grant one to the cow so that it would not produce milk? The cow belongs to its owner just as the land does. Thus I believe we would have a more consistent policy across Canada. That would prevent incidents such as those we witnessed during the last election campaign in Quebec, when some people advocated the separation of our province from the rest of Canada by saying: You see how right we are when we want to separate from the rest of Canada. In fact, whenever western people are concerned, the government is willing to compensate them, it pays them so that they will not sow, but when it comes to eastern Canada, it levies a tax so as to penalize production and efforts.

When people are not informed enough to see the facts in their true light, attempts are

made to secure the votes of those who always think that the grass is greener in the neighbour's pasture.

That is the reason why I should like this situation to be corrected so as to avoid any misunderstanding and so that we may work together harmoniously. As for me, I believe in a great Canada and I think I have a right, as a Canadian, on the entire country. The very reason of my presence in this House is to stand for those principles and those ideas, but also to point out to the government the farmers' needs, in every area, in every province and in Canada as a whole and to make demands if necessary.

That is one of the reasons that prompt me to support sincerely the motion under study so that the government will understand that we do not object for the sake of objecting, but because we want to work as all other members for the welfare of society and Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being one o'clock I do now leave the chair until 2 p.m.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, in replying to the motion and the speeches that have been made so far supporting that motion, I am in the awkward position of having to take the motion as it is written and of assuming that the hon. member meant what he said in the bottom. The motion reads: "that this House call upon the government to reverse—" I repeat the word "reverse" for emphasis—"its present policies which have deliberately depressed the agricultural economy". It is not within the rules of this House for any member to question the motives of any other member, so I am not going to do that. As both you and I well know, it is not within the rules of this House for one member to question the sincerity of another member, so I am not going to do that. Having said that, I have to assume that the hon. member is sincere when he calls upon the government to reverse its present policies respecting agriculture.

Having taken the motion as it is written, I would like to remind the hon. member that, for example, the Canadian government and