

## Oral Questions

this additional funding to hard-pressed farmers will be provided?

• (1440 )

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged by the fact that many farmers are wanting to become involved in the policy review and policy development process which I believe are overdue in terms of establishing a truly national agri-food policy to meet all the specific needs and requirements of each of the regions and each of the sectors.

In that regard we will be holding a national policy seminar in Ottawa on December 11 and December 12. As the hon. member knows, I am sure, my colleagues and I have met with all agricultural groups to talk about the basic pillars and principles that go into the foundation of that review. That dialogue has been ongoing and will continue.

I hope we will be able to make some progress at the meeting of December 11 and December 12. At that particular time we will also be addressing the very important issues of safety nets, stabilization programs and crop insurance programs, which are very vital to stability and confidence within the agricultural system.

I would hope that the hon. member would be involved in that process as well, and I welcome his input.

**Mr. Foster:** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the same minister.

In the same presentation to the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool annual meeting, the president of the Saskatchewan pool called on the government not to unilaterally cut government programs.

The budget of the Minister of Finance last spring cut \$500 million worth of support to farmers at a time when the United States was not cutting any of its programs. In fact the Export Enhancement Program has been juiced up by another \$90 million to directly affect sales of Canadian wheat to countries like Algeria.

Why is the Government of Canada unilaterally cutting these programs before any negotiations start on a subsidy code? Why is the government selling out Canadian farmers at a time when they need their help?

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Mr. Speaker, in the days of the Liberal government the average support for the grains and oilseeds sector between 1981 and 1984 was something like \$326 million on an annualized basis. Between the period 1985 and 1989 the annualized support for the grains and oilseeds sector rose to \$2.4 billion. That certainly does not strike me as a government that is walking away from supporting the agriculture industry, particularly the grains and oilseeds sector. He should be applauding us instead of condemning us.

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## JUSTICE

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General. It concerns the new and very serious allegations that were made by the former Member of Parliament, the former Conservative member of parliament for Gamelin, Mr. Gravel, who as the minister recalls pleaded guilty last February to criminal charges including the taking of bribes.

In sworn evidence before a disciplinary hearing of the Quebec Order of Engineers 10 days ago Mr. Gravel said: "I have been harassed a hell of a lot for only \$40,000. A lot of other people are taking in \$300,000 and \$400,000".

Bearing in mind the earlier allegations by the former member for Rosemount or the current member for Duvernay who said he could put a dozen people into jail with what he knew, I ask the Solicitor General: Has the Solicitor General asked the RCMP, and in particular the National Security Investigations Directorate established to look into corruption, to examine with great care these very serious new allegations of corruption by a former Conservative colleague of his?

[Translation]

**Hon. Pierre Blais (Solicitor General of Canada and Minister of State (Agriculture)):** Mr. Speaker, there is always a danger in making such allegations from the floor of the House of Commons. I must tell the hon. member that if he has any information concerning whom ever he has a responsibility, as I and every other member in this House have to make that information available to