

country, so we are expressing these feelings in an attempt to give them a quick kick in the butt so that they can realize what the problems are, and perhaps start to solve them. With this aim in mind, I should like to move the following motion, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles):

That Bill C-31 be not read now a second time but that the subject matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs with instruction that the said committee give consideration to the making of recommendations for inclusion in this said bill, that the salary for the Minister of Finance be reduced to \$100.14 a week, this being the average level of unemployment insurance benefits, so that the minister may have an appreciation of what it is like to live as one of Canada's 1.6 million unemployed.

● (1652)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. Hon. members have heard the amendment presented by the hon. member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez). I should ask for the indulgence of hon. members to give the Chair time to consider whether the amendment is receivable or not, and rule thereon. I ask hon. members to wait until after eight o'clock tonight, at which time the Chair will make a ruling on this matter.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): The hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre).

Mr. Andre: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but I have a note which indicates that I was to recognize the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council (Mr. Pinard). Is that agreeable to the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre)?

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, I have no objection to that, provided I have the opportunity of being recognized next.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Very well. The hon. member will be.

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe there is an agreement that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) will speak tonight at the very first opportunity, unless I am mistaken. I see the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is signalling to me. I should therefore like to have his opinion on the matter.

[English]

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, it has been mentioned around the halls that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) proposes to speak tonight, but I know of no agreement that he be given a special time. He can take his turn along with the rest of us ordinary members.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Supply

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Pinard (Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, have noticed one thing. On this side of the House, no one has yet spoken on this bill this afternoon, on the other hand, two hon. members have on the other side. So, I would not be averse to the idea that two government members, ordinary members or ministers, should speak one after the other, though I know, of course, that it is up to the Speaker of the House to decide, on the matter.

So, very briefly, Mr. Speaker, this bill requests the authorization to spend a certain amount in the various department during the coming fiscal year, and of course, a good part of that money will be spent on agriculture in Canada. I shall make one short comment. I think it is fundamental and of prime importance to point out that, on the agricultural scene in Canada, many things have happened in the last while. The department was reorganized, its services were relocated according to the new strategy of agricultural expansion and the new food policy. With regard to the agricultural expansion strategy, it emphasizes a team approach in agriculture, in that it gives a greater role to the provinces, producers, processors and consumers. The key elements of that food and agriculture strategy are as follows: First, increase production effectiveness; second, promote the sale of the products with the most trading potential; third, help low income farmers to improve their living standards through agriculture; fourth, preserve and improve natural farming resources and soil utilization; fifth, increase the effectiveness of the marketing system; sixth, protect the farmers against income instability and the natural risk of farm production; seventh, ensure longer term protection against foreign competition for certain products; and eighth, extend the access of Canadian farm products to foreign markets.

Concrete achievements at this time are as follows: first, a free system of paid telephone messages implemented since November 1, 1977; second, three new federal assistance programs totalling \$28 million, announced in October 1977 and designed to increase our feed grain storage capacity, to increase local feed grain stocks and to promote the building of grain elevators; third, the Canadian missions at the GATT meetings have consulted farming representatives on many occasions; and fourth, the Eastern and Western Divisions of the Research Branch will have their headquarters relocated outside Ottawa, in Saskatoon and Quebec City.

Mr. Speaker, there is also the food strategy. A white paper on our food strategy was published in June 1977 and its three objectives are as follows: first, maintain food prices; second, maintain adequate supplies; and third, provide producer and fishermen with stable incomes adjusted to their work and their investments. Agriculture is very important in the Drummond constituency which I represent, and I am pleased that the Canadian government is considering spending very substantial amounts to help our farmers in all areas of production.