

Adjournment Debate

P.E.I. also has a lot in common with Saskatchewan in that the rural nature of your province and the rural nature of my province are very similar.

The government is well aware of the problems that are being foisted upon rural Canada. Prince Edward Island felt the brunt of post office closures before any other part of this country, and now post office closures are affecting communities in my constituency and across Canada.

RCMP budgets are being affected. Emergency vehicle communications are being affected because of increased licence costs. One thing that I have just become aware of with the increased tax on reading materials, the tax on books, is difficulties at some of our regional libraries. I don't know if there are regional libraries in Prince Edward Island but there certainly are in Saskatchewan, and those regional libraries are now having a difficult time buying the books that are necessary to help inform members of our rural communities.

I feel very strongly that this government has launched an attack on rural Canada, with Prince Edward Island feeling it first and those of us in western Canada feeling it next.

My question is for the hon. member who spoke mostly about P.E.I. potatoes. I should mention before I put the question directly that I think Prince Edward Island potatoes are the second best in the whole world. The first, of course, come out of my garden.

Anyway, my question to the member from Prince Edward Island, Mr. Speaker, is; would he agree with me that there is an attack on rural Canada and it is starting with cutbacks in services and decreasing prices paid and attention paid to our primary producers who make up the backbone of rural Canada?

Mr. McGuire: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his complimentary remarks about my province of Prince Edward Island.

I would just like to say that the reason the potatoes in his garden are so good is because the seed came from P.E.I. in the first place.

A lot of Islanders in the past, especially in the 1930s, left P.E.I. and the other provinces in the maritimes, went out to Saskatchewan on harvest excursions. They stayed, made their living there, contributed very much to the

economy and to the farming sector of Saskatchewan. One of those people included—and I hope he is watching today from the city of Calgary—is my uncle Ernest McGuire who left in the late 1920s, early 1930s. He is 88 years old, still hale and hearty and living in the city of Calgary.

To respond to the hon. member's concern about rural Canada, there can be little doubt that rural Canada is under siege. One of the main illustrations of that fact is what is happening right across Canada as a result of the free trade agreement with the United States. We find food processing facilities, especially in southern Ontario, are closing, and there is very little hope that these food processing plants will ever reopen. For example, Campbell's Food in Manitoba is closing and it will never reopen as a food processing facility again.

He also mentioned the closure of rural post offices. This hit Prince Edward Island extremely hard, especially recently with three additional post offices closing. This is cutting off in the rural areas one of the few federal presences existing in rural Canada and in rural P.E.I. It is just one example of how this government is contributing to the depopulation and the lack of hope in the rural areas.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): It being 7 p.m., it is my duty to inform the House that pursuant to Standing Order 81(17), proceedings on the motion have expired.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

AGRICULTURE

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, on December 17, 1990, I asked in this House if Canada has taken advantage of and is using the instruments available to it under the free trade agreement to call for consultations with the United States regarding the losses incurred by the Canadian Wheat Board and Canadian farmers for the 1990-91 crop year.