

We are in a situation, Mr. Speaker, as we discuss hog stabilization, with the Minister saying we need this Bill right away in order to help the agricultural industry out of a difficult position. Of course, in my own riding that is very much the case. We are in a very difficult position. On the other hand, a large number of the people in my own constituency are hog producers who need these measures, yet we have no assurance that they will be helped in any way, shape or form. So we wonder what the rush is to pass a Bill which is not going to be of assistance to a large number of those who need the assistance.

Furthermore, there are confusing interpretations about some of these situations at the present time. For instance, the Minister of Agriculture was quoted in a *London Free Press* article of June 17, 1985. The article describes how subsidies invite retaliation such as countervails, and so forth, from other countries. I would like to quote part of the last paragraph of the article in the *London Free Press*. It states:

The best solution would be a stabilization plan administered by Government but entirely financed by farmers—

But if a plan is going to be funded only by the farmers, that is no plan at all. Our farmers need help at this point. And if the farmers wanted a plan of their own, it would be administered by themselves. If you were one of those farmers, Mr. Speaker—recognizing the neutrality of your position—would you trust the Tories with your money? Obviously not, Mr. Speaker. We can see that you would not trust the Tories with your money.

Mr. Boyer: Let the record show the Speaker nodded.

Mr. Boudria: Of course, neither would the farmers. Like yourself, Mr. Speaker, they would be very reluctant to get into that kind of proposition.

My distinguished colleague, the Hon. Member for Papineau (Mr. Ouellet), referred to the Agenda for Economic Renewal proposed by the Government last fall. He explained very well some very important questions he wanted answered. I invite the Minister to take note of those questions, as I am sure he did.

The Government seems to be of the view that tripartite is the way of the future in providing assistance to agriculture. In its Agenda for Economic Renewal the Government states in part:

The federal Government must examine its involvement in the sector to ensure that it is directed at maintaining a strong, efficient, and competitive Canadian agricultural sector, and that it recognizes its special challenges.

It states further on, and I quote:

The new tripartite approach to red meat stabilization may be a good example of how both levels of Government and the producers themselves can co-operate to develop improvements over former arrangements.

What does that mean, Mr. Speaker? Does it mean, for instance, that there would be tripartite in the dairy industry in the future? I ask you, Mr. Speaker, does it mean that? Of course, in that case the Canadian farmers would be worried that the Government would withdraw from its present responsibilities.

Agricultural Stabilization Act

Obviously, Canadian farmers are upset. They are in a difficult situation. They have been promised a lot by the present Government and have received very little. Just to outline to you, Mr. Speaker, the frustration of the Canadian farmers at the present time, I would like to read a resolution passed by the Glengarry, Prescott and Russell Federations of Agriculture. It states, and I quote:

Whereas Mr. Brian Mulroney during the last election campaign made a written promise to provide agriculture with long-term financing at stable and affordable rates and

Whereas farm financing was not addressed in the recent budget,

Therefore we, the members of the Glengarry, Prescott and Russell Federations of Agriculture jointly demand that the Prime Minister of Canada fulfil his campaign promises and be it further resolved that we demand that the cuts of \$60 million in the Agriculture programs announced November 8, 1984 and the proposed \$50 million cut in the May 23 Budget be cancelled and that full funding be immediately restored to the Agriculture Department.

I bring this to your attention, Mr. Speaker, so that you will understand, as I am sure you do, the difficulty facing the agricultural industry of our country.

The Bill before us has generated quite a bit of controversy. We know that some Conservative Members from Quebec, and other areas where the cost of production in certain commodities is higher than in other regions, want to have provincial programs which will bring those producers into a more advantageous position. That, of course, is very important to the farmers of those regions.

As I said the other day, the farmers of the regions I represent are located right near the City of Montreal in eastern Ontario. They compete against the Quebec farmers. They receive little or no programs in Ontario which could help them because the previous Conservative Government of Ontario did nothing for the farmers. So they are selling on the Quebec market in competition with the Quebec farmer who has a larger provincial subsidy. The difficulty with this, of course, Mr. Speaker—and I am sure you have recognized it by now—is that it leaves them a lot less profit.

At a time when agriculture was somewhat more profitable—not that it was ever very profitable but it was more profitable than it is now—the farmers of my constituency still made money, even though others made more. They managed to make ends meet. But at a time when the margin of profit has decreased, so much, or does not even exist, they are in a losing proposition. Therefore, the farmers I represent in eastern Ontario want a regional component, but “regional” not necessarily meaning provincial. In other words, there should be smaller regions within the provinces so that the farmers of my riding, and others in similar circumstances, could be assisted.

The Minister has brought forward an amendment. As far as we are concerned, Mr. Speaker, it brings more confusion and less clarity to a Bill which is already controversial and difficult to understand. Let me read briefly, Mr. Speaker, Clause 8(3)(a) of the amendment. It states, and I quote:

● (1940)

The Minister may enter into an agreement with a province in respect of an agricultural commodity only if he is of the opinion that such an agreement