

which they are competing, for instance, their greatest competitor, the United States of America, have no such program for their producers at all. We have an agricultural stabilization program here, ASA, which provides some assistance. They say it is inadequate at the present time. How quick we will go forward with another program depends on what the Provinces want. I offered a program—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

[Translation]

**Mr. La Salle:** Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary for the Minister of Agriculture. I did not ask him what the Government has done for farmers. We know that. I simply asked him whether he was prepared to ask the banks . . . Last week, all three parties in this House agreed unanimously to refer Bill C-653 to committee, to make recommendations to the Government for the purpose of helping farmers being threatened by bankruptcy. The farmers' bankers should know that the Government and Parliament are prepared to make new proposals to help them get through this difficult period, especially in view of financial requirements for purchasing seed, and so forth, in cases where the bank no longer is prepared to lend them money. In the circumstances, my question is as follows: would the Minister, in view of the unanimous will expressed by the House last week during the debate on Bill C-653, could the Minister at least ask the banks to be less rigid in pursuing payments owed by farmers, since the Government has actually decided in favour of making new proposals. I am not asking what the proposals will be, but could—

**Madam Speaker:** Order!

[English]

**Mr. Whelan:** Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member knows that I support the Bill. I hope his Party sees fit to give it speedy passage through Committee so that that Bill can become law.

Also I say to the Hon. Member that if his Government had not withdrawn the legislation or the type of program I had provided for income assurance for farmers—and his agriculture critic said in the Standing Committee the other day that it was too rich and too costly—there would have been no farm bankruptcies now at all.

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#### NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS

##### CANADIAN POSITION ON GENEVA ARMS CONTROL TALKS

**Mr. Douglas Roche (Edmonton South):** Madam Speaker, I have only one question, which is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It concerns the visit to Ottawa this week of U.S. Vice-President Bush. Will the Government of Canada be putting before the Vice-President any proposals which would contribute realistically to the nuclear negotiations in Geneva so that an acceptable solution can be found to the

nuclear arms question, which is the principal concern of people all over the world?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, it is the intention of the Prime Minister and myself to hold discussions with the Vice-President. Among the topics for discussion will certainly be the arms control situation and the negotiations that are currently under way at Geneva. We hope to be making known to the Vice-President our concern that success be attained at these negotiations. Also we will be expressing our views on various proposals which have been made public with respect to these negotiations.

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#### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

##### ZIMBABWE—OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the same Minister. There is growing concern for another area of unrest and it has to do with the Lancaster House Agreement and the independence of Zimbabwe. I have written to the Minister for almost a year now concerned about developments there. In his last letter about a month ago the Minister said that "The common judgment was that the judicial system at present operated as an effective part of the constitutional framework, and that there had been significant improvements in the observance of human rights since Zimbabwe became independent". In light of recent new developments, and news stories breaking, does the Minister still stand behind this statement?

● (1500)

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, we have been increasingly concerned about recent developments in Zimbabwe, and we have expressed these concerns to the Government and the authorities. Recently a member of the administration of that country was in Ottawa and these concerns were expressed to him personally. My letter, obviously, has had reference to developments since the beginning of independence and the new Government, and did not cover these recent events which are a cause of great concern to Canada and to other countries.

**Madam Speaker:** I just want to tell the Hon. Member for Surrey-White Rock-North Delta (Mr. Friesen) that I do not know how he can call the question he just asked supplementary to the one posed by the Hon. Member for Edmonton South (Mr. Roche).

**An Hon. Member:** It was External Affairs.

**Madam Speaker:** The Hon. Member did get in on that little trick, but it will not work every time.

**Some Hon. Members:** Shame!

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!