

The other action that I think is important is the removal of the federal sales tax on farm fuels. I would have been in favour of not having that last tax apply, as I think many people would have been. However, the fact is that we were able to carry out our election promise of rebating that tax. As a result, farmers in my riding today are not paying the full federal sales tax on farm fuels. That is important because every bit of assistance that we can provide is significant.

The actions of the Farm Credit Corporation are demonstrative of the differences between the two Governments. Prior to the last election I received a phone call from a farmer who was stuck with a 16.75 per cent interest rate on a loan. He was desperate because that loan was getting him in real trouble. The interest was depleting his operating capital. As a result, he was in a very difficult situation. He called me and I phoned the then Minister of Agriculture, the one with the green hat, and expressed the problem to him and asked for some assistance. Even at election time, when I thought the Liberal Minister would have been sensitive, all I got was a deaf ear. I must say that I was able to phone that farmer a little while later and say that the new Government had listened to him and we could now get the interest rate down. That farmer is a happy man. That is the kind of thing that the Minister of Agriculture has done. The shared-risk mortgage program is extremely important because that shared risk means that farmers now have some assurance that they will not be hit with the high interest rates they were nailed with by the previous administration.

There is also the moratorium. The other day I had one of my best days this year when I was able to call one of the farmers in my riding who was going to be foreclosed by the FCC. I was able to tell him that the Minister had called a moratorium, that I had checked into it and that it applied to him. That man is now trying to put his farming business back together and I think that he will succeed because the Government listened and recognized his problems. In spite of what the previous Liberal Government did, that farmer now has a second chance. We do have a track record, Mr. Speaker, which I think demonstrates that we are indeed interested in agriculture, indeed concerned about farmers, and are indeed going to meet the needs that they have today.

The way in which we have expanded the appeal process for farmers through the Farm Finance Review Board is of benefit to them. The Western Grain Stabilization Act is a favourite of mine as well. I remember a short while ago when the Liberals made an amendment to allow one payment. The funds were finally delivered right around election time. This Government has amended the Act to allow those payments to be made at any time. Since this Government has come into power there have been payments made in the spring and the fall that have really been of benefit to farmers. There are many things on the Government's record that demonstrate its interest, concern and action.

The other day I happened to look at a list of some of the things that the Minister of Agriculture has done. In fact, I have it with me here today. I found it interesting that he has

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had 122 accomplishments in the short period of time that he has been in Government. Dividing that by the number of months that he has been the Minister of Agriculture, we find that he has made a major decision which positively affects our farmers on an average of 10 times per month. If we consider that there is an average of 20 working days in each month, we find that every second day the Minister of Agriculture has made a major announcement which very much affects our farmers. After all of that we face the type of motion made by the Liberals who did none of those positive things in all the years they were in power.

I see that I am running out of time, Mr. Speaker, so I will conclude my remarks very quickly. I would like to spend the rest of the afternoon just reading from the list of accomplishments of the Government. I could go on for two or three hours doing that.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cooper:** The future of agriculture is very tenuous at this point, Mr. Speaker. It is a difficult situation which we on this side are certainly not ignoring. We are not saying that in the first year in which we have been in Government we have been able to solve those problems. We are not saying that we have accomplished everything we wanted to do. We are saying that we are listening to input from farmers so that we can act on it. The Government has done a lot, Mr. Speaker. As a Member representing an agricultural community, I am proud of the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Transport and the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board because in the short time that those gentlemen have been in Government they have done so much more than the Liberals ever did. I think that they deserve to be applauded rather than criticized through a phoney motion such as the one which is before us today.

**Mr. Foster:** Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member has done an admirable job of apple-polishing with his Minister, but I do not think he will convince anyone that the Government has any great commitment to agriculture. Since the Government did not put any money into the Farm Credit Corporation to lower interest rates, since it cut the budget of the Department of Agriculture by \$50 million and deindexed it so that it will lose another \$15 million a year, one really has to take what the Hon. Member said with a grain of salt. He told us how wonderful it is to be able to go to the Ministers of Agriculture and Transport, but he is really not getting very much. That is the problem. He speaks of the soothing noises and so on. He talked about one farmer who had, I think, a 14.5 per cent interest rate on a loan who had it reduced to 12.75 per cent. If that farmer is in the cash crop or red meat industry, can he really cope with a 12.75 per cent interest rate on a loan? As I pointed out to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise), the reason he was able to do the flip on loans above 14 per cent down to 12.75 per cent was that the previous Liberal Government had some \$575 million in the FCC budget so that flip could take place.