

Agricultural Policies

hurriedly dealt with by the Standing Committee on Agriculture. This morning, when the committee started to deal with a small amendment that added only three words, after a very limited amount of discussion the hatchetmen were rolled out. A motion was made that the amendment must be dealt with by way of a vote. We were told that we must move on. These are the steamroller tactics this government is prepared to use in committee. Any member of this House who is concerned with the negative attitude of the two ministers responsible for agriculture should watch very closely the willingness of the government to adopt constructive ideas presented from time to time in this House and in committees.

The minister can say, all is well and good regarding Bill C-197, but there is now a constructive amendment to this bill before the House. If it is accepted, I am sure that when the minister has enough nerve to bring Bill C-197 back into the House it will be dealt with rather quickly. The minister must not fail to give adequate assurance that Bill C-197 will provide for producer participation. As Mr. Harrold, the President of the Alberta Wheat Pool, has said, the producer should have a direct voice in the preparation and operation of such policy. There will be no hold-up in agriculture legislation if the producer is given that assurance.

Mr. Nowlan: Could I ask the hon. member a question? It is with regard to the situation the member encountered this morning in the agriculture committee when he moved this formal amendment. After 20 minutes of discussion, it was moved that a vote be taken on the amendment. I would like to know if this move was made because the government members thought they could not hold their quorum any longer, in view of the lack of a quorum since March.

Mr. Horner: That could very well be. I am not a member of the office of the Government Whip, but the rarity of the occasions on which a quorum has been present in that committee could very well be the reason.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): The hon. member for Matane.

Mr. Roberts: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): The Chair is not at liberty to permit another question.

Mr. Horner: It can be done with unanimous consent.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): Does the House give unanimous consent to a further question?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Roberts: Can the hon. member tell me whether he and his colleague rehearsed their spontaneous questions and impromptu answers before they came into the House?

Mr. Horner: When like minds are thinking on a given subject, rehearsals and speechwriters are not necessary. We speak from the heart about what concerns us.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): Order, please. I think the Chair was right in the first place.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre De Bané (Matane): Mr. Speaker, I believe the demagoguery indulged in by the previous speakers for the opposition shows that they are not sincere when they criticize the present policy. As far as I am concerned, I am not saying that there will be some improvements, but I regret this demagogic manner of tackling a problem that so seriously affects the agricultural population.

Maybe I am not as competent as some of the speakers who preceded me on the subject of agricultural policy, but I nevertheless believe that it is my duty to speak on behalf of the farmers of my riding and their association, the U.C.C., more especially as I find their claims are justified in fact and in law.

The problem may be stated as follows: both levels of government and all kinds of theoreticians have geared a large part of the labour market of my province to farming for economic reasons as well as in the name of a scale of mystic and social values. I say "geared" and the unfortunate thing in that planned economy is not so much the contempt shown for free choice as the unjustified taking over by governments of responsibilities implied in that planned economy. That is the problem, the whole problem.

When a government encourages a large proportion of the labour force to take up farming, I suggest that the authorities have no right to make the agricultural class pay for their lack of foresight. In a way, it is not even a financial problem, considering the huge investments made directly or indirectly,