

*Agricultural Stabilization Act*

House that the amendment indicates that the Minister may, only if he is of the opinion, stipulate the stabilization and may allow additional subsidies on top of what the Bill will provide, if they do not exceed the general subsidy given by another province covered under the legislation.

One can understand why the provincial Governments are objecting. They should be objecting. They should have been objecting all along, ever since the new Government of Canada took office. They should have objected when a measure was passed by the Government which drastically affected the people of their provinces, but they turned a blind eye. This is a good example of a provincial Government saying that it does not agree with what the federal Government is doing.

I should like to refer to another area of great concern to me. The Government made promises in terms of trade with the United States.

**Mr. Fraleigh:** Stick to the Bill.

**Mr. Baker:** I hear the Hon. Member. When I mention trade with the United States, the Hon. Member should realize that it is one of the pertinent points which should be discussed when dealing with this Bill. We have seen the Government of the United States, under the guise of its Department of Commerce and under the guise of the International Trade Commission, act in such a way as we have never seen before on a variety of items, including hogs. Tariffs have been imposed on many items. Some Hon. Members would disagree, but if our exporters to the United States are required to post bonds, I consider that to be the imposition of tariffs.

When we look at what has happened under the International Trade Commission and the U.S. Department of Commerce to other primary producers in Canada, we can understand why producers in the Province of Quebec are objecting. For example, in one of our primary products, that of fish, the Government of the United States through those mechanisms imposed a bond structure. In fact, our hog exporters have to put up bonds, blank cheques, promissory notes or whatever when exporting their products to the United States, which are called due when the final decision is made. When they post bonds they are really posting money in financial terms. It is a hardship on them and they have to consider then what the result would be if that was called by the U.S. Government.

● (2030)

So we have seen the U.S. Government now for first time in Canadian history taking a crack at all kinds of items from lumber to footwear to saltfish to raspberries and now to hogs. One wonders, as a primary producer, as a farmer, as a person involved in agriculture in this country—one would have to wonder—where the end is going to come, and what is going to happen when those bonds are called. What is going to happen if the decision that is brought down is going to be in favour of the initial judgment of the International Trade Commission who had to examine documents, had to examine books, had to come up with some good rationale for the imposition of the posting of the bond in the first place?

On those two items the people of Canada are wondering what went wrong. What went wrong with this great relationship that was supposed to emanate automatically when this new Government of Canada came into power? What happened to this marvellous trade relationship that it was going to have with the United States of America? What happened to all of those meetings that were supposed to have taken place between the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the president of the United States when each of these items came up for public debate? When people knew that there was a possibility of a tariff on a product they automatically complained, they went to their provincial Governments who automatically asked the federal Government, through the Department of External Affairs, to intervene.

The point of the matter is that the answer from the Department of External Affairs has been the same as the answer from the Prime Minister's Office; "Well, we will make representations but we really cannot interfere at this point in the negotiations". Primary producers have listened to that, with saltfish, with the Prime Minister down in his own riding prior to the Quebec Summit, and the Prime Minister said "yes, I am going to take this up with the president of the United States". The producers went home and they figured that if the Prime Minister of Canada is going to take this up with the president of the United States then surely a solution is going to be found. Then all of a sudden the axe came down and when that axe comes down it is an interesting axe because it cuts in many directions. It ultimately cuts each province and each exporter differently. Tariffs could range from 2 per cent to 22 per cent, and they call that a 12 or 13 or 14 per cent average.

On those two questions of dealing with the provincial Governments, the Governments duly elected by the people of the provinces, everything was supposed to be fine and dandy, and everything with U.S. trade was supposed to be great.

There is just one other item that I wanted to bring to the attention of the House concerning what appears to be, on the part of this Government, an inevitable desire for the Minister in charge of the Department to always have unlimited power under the Act, even after decisions are made. We see it in this Act and in this particular amendment.

Fishermen, such as those involved in the saltfish industry, farmers, people who are involved in forestry and those who raise hogs, are faced with tariffs. They are asking the Government of Canada what it will do about it. Who is going to pay the tariff to be imposed on hogs under this legislation? Who is going to pay the difference of 12 or 13 or 14 per cent? Is it going to be the farmer? Is it going to be the producers' organization? Is it going to be the provincial jurisdiction responsible, or is it going to be the federal Government of Canada?

I would suggest that this Bill and many other Bills before this House, and many other actions of this Government since they have been elected, be sent back to the drawing-board for more discussion, more consideration and more consultation with the people affected, the provincial Governments affected and the producers' organizations affected.