

The Address—Mr. La Salle

Mr. Olivier: Mr. Speaker, I regret to interrupt the minister and member for Joliette. I commend him for his speech but I would ask him to restrict his judgments. I would also ask him, when he judges another member of this House, to tell us where he is quoting from and where he draws his examples. I am quite prepared to put them in practice, so long as he tells us where he draws them from. Mr. Speaker, the results of the May 22 election prove unquestionably that Quebecers rejected his party, as they always have.

Mr. La Salle: I could certainly give the hon. member some examples, but I do not recall hearing him speak in the House and I cannot draw anything from his actions.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will not give the examples the hon. member requests because there are not enough—

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Scott, Victoria-Haliburton): Order, please. I request that the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. La Salle) carry on with his speech.

[*Translation*]

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, I shall be glad to. In another connection, Mr. Speaker, I should like to say two words about a daily concern, namely that of the development of agriculture in Canada and in Quebec in particular. Concern has been expressed because no specific mention of agriculture was made in the Speech from the Throne, but you may rest assured, Mr. Speaker, that agriculture will be taken care of because that industry is of capital importance in our economic forecasts. Let no one worry about that. In this House I represent a riding whose economy, for the major part agricultural, depends on the resources of the soil. My riding of Joliette is an area whose production is largely agricultural in nature.

The situation of the dairy industry as a whole is also of major concern to us. It has experienced difficult years. My hon. friends across the way will remember that. We were not in power, Mr. Speaker, but I remember well what happened. I merely want to point out, for the guidance of my colleagues, that the Progressive Conservative government authorized, within a few weeks after May 22, an increase in the quotas of milk produced for export by some three million hundred weights, which represents sales of some \$39 million for dairy producers. In the near future we also expect to increase by 1 to 2 per cent the quotas of milk and its by-products for consumption. The 20 cents previously withheld and recently reimbursed to the producers amounted to \$26 million of which \$13 million went to Quebec alone. To my mind, those figures prove our consideration for agriculture. Last month, my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise), had the opportunity of inaugurating a processing plant at Sainte-Claire; the project had been initiated by the previous government. I am very happy to say the plant opened recently.

That was part of an investment amounting to \$2 million which also allowed the Department of Regional Economic

Expansion to spend \$500,000 in the port of Quebec to store about 100,000 tons of products. That will bring into the economy of the greater Quebec City area investments amounting to \$50 million. Another project of that type is in progress in Saint-Alexandre, near Rivière-du-Loup, which calls for an investment of around \$7 million for the establishment of a processing plant.

These were, at least for the moment, some of our achievements, would it be only to show how interested we are in agriculture. I believe that my party, considering that its members are much more representative of the rural sector than people were inclined to think so far—and I personally have an important role to play, Mr. Speaker, because I have already received countless submissions from farmer groups with which, just like with my friends from the other side, I will be very pleased to co-operate in order to improve the conditions of farmers in my province—will be very pleased to support any legislation which would allow our country as a whole, whatever province it may affect directly, to benefit from subsidies or policies which would answer current needs, considering the present circumstances.

I think, Mr. Speaker, my time is running out. I wanted to take this opportunity to remind the House that we are looking forward to an excellent session, and that we also expect to achieve certain objectives, including two which are fundamental: restoring the economic climate in this country, and of course decreasing unemployment with, hopefully, some help insofar as one would want to be objective enough. I think our friends opposite will have to show a minimum of objectivity and co-operation to help the government realize those good intentions.

As for the unity of this country, we will spare nothing to realize the fundamental objective of all Canadians, that is to recognize their differences and then accept them and strive together to build a wonderful country which can assure equity, equality and justice for everyone.

● (1540)

[*English*]

Mr. Roy MacLaren (Etobicoke North): Mr. Speaker, may I join in congratulating you upon your appointment to your high office. I share also in the tradition of this House in congratulating the hon. member for Eric (Mr. Fretz) and the hon. member for Cardigan (Mr. MacDonald) upon their speeches. Perhaps I may be permitted a personal note of congratulations to the hon. member for Cardigan, since I suppose in a way he is my member of parliament, representing as he does a beautiful area where I am happy to say I still have the land on which my ancestors settled some 200 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I represent a new constituency in metropolitan Toronto, Etobicoke North, a vital area where industry, particularly light and high-technology industry, leads our constituents to take a lively interest in economic policies pursued by the government, particularly those relating to industrial strategy. Etobicoke North is a constituency of hard-working, diligent citizens, many of whom have only recently become