

Supply

I put it very simply to you, Madam Speaker, that this debate is really a matter between two major Parties which have governed this country for the last 100 years. This is a question of trust. I have a list here a page long of the horrible things that happened to us. I remember in the early days of the Diefenbaker period when my job was to prepare an over-all national agriculture policy. The same type of criticism was thrown at us. At the time it looked pretty bad. Specifically, I can recall when I came back with the news of the first grain sale, the long-term deal, to China. The NDP said that it was not a deal at all, that it was a hoax. The Liberal Party said that it looked as if we were selling wheat on credit to our enemies to fight our friends.

I can say no more. This is a question of faith. Does our record not deserve a little more trust than this motion represents? If we look at the Liberal record, then how are we to respond?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Mr. Champagne (Champlain): Madam Speaker, I sincerely believe that the short but convincing comments by my hon. colleague have shown that especially since this Government was elected in September 1984, Canadian agriculture has made tremendous progress.

[English]

I would like to ask a question of my hon. friend.

[Translation]

Madam Speaker, I wish he would tell me how he sees the various efforts that have been made in the agricultural industry across Canada. Let's start in Newfoundland and go on to British Columbia. First of all, let's talk about the long-term dairy policy that Canadian producers wanted so badly. The Liberals had been promising the policy since 1980, and since 1980, producers have been in limbo, and it took a Progressive Conservative Government to finalize the policy.

• (1740)

Madam Speaker, the House will recall that as far as Quebec and the 1983 crop losses are concerned, we signed the agreement and we dealt with the problem because the Liberals had failed to do so, claiming that Quebec producers didn't need the money. Madam Speaker, I wish the Hon. Member would tell me what he thinks about the proposal by the Hon. Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) and his comment that Canadian producers and Canadian agriculture are at risk, when for 20 years his own Government refused to help them. Madam Speaker, I wish the Hon. Member would talk about the 16.75 per cent interest the Farm Credit Corporation was charging farmers when the Liberals were in power. Why didn't the Hon. Member for Algoma, the present agriculture critic, present his motion at the time? If he had been perfectly honest he would have done so. I wish the Hon. Member would explain, because

I know how well informed he is on agricultural issues and how concerned he is about the economic future of our farmers.

Madam Speaker, what Canada wants, what the Government of Canada wants and what the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) has been delivering since 1984 is, first of all, consultation with the provinces. We have talked and we have agreed on various programs. The last agreement we signed with Quebec was worth \$35 million. I wish my hon. friend would comment on the agreements we signed with the Maritimes. Effectiveness depends first and foremost on how we treat our farmers, the provinces and the Canadian agricultural industry. Madam Speaker, in concluding, because I would not want to make undue demands on the time of this House, I wish the Hon. Member would comment on upcoming agreements. These are the bilateral agreements with the United States and the multilateral GATT agreements, because this is the first time a responsible Government, a Progressive Conservative Government has taken the trouble to put the agriculture question right out in front at the Tokyo Round.

This is the first time a responsible Government, a moral Government has taken on the responsibility for making stabilization payments, for making an additional payment of one billion dollars to grain producers, and the Hon. Member for Algoma is complaining. Madam Speaker, what is he complaining about? Is it because we are helping farmers? If that is the purpose of his speech, I think he should try listening a little more. He should co-operate more, and above all, and I say this for the benefit of the Hon. Member for Richmond—Wolfe (Mr. Tardiff), look at the 400 or so achievements of this Government in the agricultural sector since it came to power. Those are not mere words, those are concrete measures. Canadian agriculture is one of our main economic priorities, and with a responsible Government and a responsible Minister of Agriculture like the one we have today, I think we will be able to see some very positive results.

I therefore wish my hon. friend would give me his views on these various questions.

[English]

Mr. Hamilton: Madam Speaker, I cannot answer all those questions. What I am simply saying is that the Government of which I was a Member had a tremendous record in every province of this country. When we are met with a motion like this it becomes a question of whether the people have forgotten the trust they put in us for all those years.

On the question of trust, the man working for me when I was winding up this effort in 1962 is the man who is presently Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). I called him my private secretary but he called himself by another name. He brought the exotic semen into Canada which caused a great revolution in the cattle industry. When I could not speak very well in Quebec he explained what I was trying to say. We did well in Quebec in 1962, 1963 and 1965 in the rural areas. I think that is all I need to say.