

*Agricultural Policies*

exchange for the dollar is going to be, he should expect not to be answered or to be answered in the simple negative?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard):** Order. I would ask hon. members to come back to the subject matter of the motion. As the House realizes, this is taking up the time of the hon. member.

**Mr. Nowlan:** Mr. Speaker, it is my time, but I appreciate the problem you have. That problem is confounded and compounded when the Minister without Portfolio stands up and starts to rationalize the simple answer of the Minister of Finance to a question by the hon. member for Dauphin about a floating exchange, a flat exchange or a high exchange, which was the same answer the Minister of Finance gave to me in the Finance and Economic Affairs Committee when he said that the policies of the government are for the stability of the dollar. The Minister of Finance was caught out. He made a stupid answer to a very important question and now he is trying to weasel around it. But he does not need the Minister without Portfolio to help him weasel. That minister has enough problems to weasel around Operation Lift and other agricultural programs.

Be that as it may, Mr. Speaker, this afternoon in the quiet hours of Friday we are speaking on an opposition motion under the new rules, directing attention to the agricultural problems of Canada. Oh, there is another voice. Is that the voice from Algoma East? Since the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) walked out of the chamber we have not heard much. We heard some sound from the hon. member for Algoma East, but he is a nice fellow and we don't want to get him involved.

**An hon. Member:** You are all heart.

**Mr. Nowlan:** Well, I have a big heart. There is the member from Lanark. He preaches outside this House and makes noises inside the House, but he very rarely makes speeches inside the House. I don't mind hearing him. Actually, he can contribute. I have heard some of his speeches and they are not too bad.

This is a motion presented by one of my good friends in the NDP, although they are not my political friends. On this occasion I support as far as I can the principle behind this motion which is trying to direct the attention of the government to agricultural problems. Unfortunately, under the new

[Mr. Lang.]

rules—and I think Parliament should look at them in the context of the experience we have had in the last session or two—there is no vote on this motion. The bite is taken out of the motion. It is like a dog without a bark. That is why we have to try to make a little sound, so that people outside may hear. We hope others may listen and respond to some of the things that are said here today on agriculture, because if there was ever a basic industry of Canada that needed some response and a receptive hearing, it is the agricultural industry from coast to coast. I do not care whether you are representing the chicken interests of Fraser East or the apple growers of Annapolis Valley—all segments of agriculture are in trouble, are bothered, concerned and most uncertain about the future. And they are not helped by some government policies of the immediate past.

On that basis I have no hesitation in speaking to this motion. In doing so, I agree completely with what the Minister of Agriculture said earlier today, that the farmers of this land want some planning, some organization, some direction and some co-ordination. Of course they do, but they do not want to lose their voice. It is the only thing they have, other than the soil they work and the products they grow. They have a voice and a vote. The vote comes once every four or five years. But surely this Minister of Agriculture, representing a government that practices something called, in those long ago days, participatory democracy, does not want to take away the voice of the man of the soil who wants to contribute at least his voice to the direction of those policies?

I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, and to any government member of this House—and I have not yet had it contradicted—that Bill C-197 does in fact take the direct voice away from the farmer. I say "farmer," but let us not just talk about the farmer on the farm because Bill C-197 affects every individual and group involved in the agricultural community of Canada, right from the seed to the sale of the product. With respect to Canadians who live in the city and who think they are not going to be affected by the bill, I ask what happened to them when the Dairy Commission was set up? Did the price of milk go down? No, the price of milk went up and the price of other commodities has gone up.

If Bill C-197 could give co-ordination and direction, we on this side would be all for it. But we are also for producer participation at some stage in the formulation of the policies