

Supply

has not begun to address the issues about which it spoke with great flourishes during the summer. Government Members said that they were going to be the great helmsmen of the agricultural community. We need only look at some examples to see what has really happened.

● (1620)

We should look at the paper put forward on tax issues in agriculture by the Department of Finance. What does it say about all the commitments the now Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) made last summer? It says that they will not really work. We have heard all this gobbledegook from the Department of Finance before. We know that it can find all of those answers to questions over which members of the Conservative Party rose in wild indignation during our tenure in government. Here they are coming up with exactly the same thing. There has been no change. The same paper has been put forward by the Hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson). He is a Tory, I believe. The paper is in his name and it contains such things as why agri-bonds will not work and why capital gains cannot be established. The most effective critique of Mr. Mulroney's promises come from his own Minister of Finance.

We cannot expect the farmers, who have been waiting in grand expectation since the summer for Mulroney and company to get their act together, suddenly to pick up this paper that was produced by the Minister of Finance and say—

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn) rises on a point of order, which I believe will be that the Hon. Member should not name the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) by name.

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member knows that when he is addressing or speaking of other Members of the House, he must address them by their constituency or by their office.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I am sure the Hon. Member knows that.

Mr. Axworthy: I beg the pardon of the Hon. Member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn). I would not in any way want to denigrate the Prime Minister by calling him by his last name.

I would say that the Hon. Prime Minister has one more time been befuddled and betrayed by his own Minister of Finance who contradicted everything he has said in this white paper. Either that is so or it is the Minister of Finance who is really telling it as it is and it was the Right Hon. distinguished, esteemed gentleman who occupies the seat of the Prime Minister who does not know what the hell he is talking about. It is probably closer to the point that the Prime Minister simply made a commitment that he had no intention of fulfilling. He was up on that platform about which most farmers know a great deal because they know exactly what cows produce. That

is the platform on which Tories stand when they make agricultural promises.

Let us look at another very critical issue, Mr. Speaker. The Government was going to deal with the immediate cash crisis of the western farmer. When our Leader spoke in Prince Albert, he said that the very first piece of legislation that would be brought into the House would be an amendment to the Western Grain Stabilization Act so that western farmers would have cash in their hands on discretion either before the new year or after the new year, depending on their tax positions.

This House opened the first week of November. The "associate-we're-not-sure" Minister responsible for the Wheat Board—and I will return to that in a moment—has said consistently, "any day now, mañana". I think he took his parliamentary lessons from the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) who keeps making promises—

Mr. Redway: That's right.

Mr. Axworthy: Oh, there is one of our distinguished agricultural representatives from the City of Toronto sitting in the corner.

The fact of the matter is that the Government had every opportunity to bring in that change to the Western Grain Stabilization Fund at the very beginning of this Parliament. It is now the first week of February. Where is that change? As a result, many farmers do not know what choices to make in terms of purchases of fertilizer and in terms of making their commitments to the future, because they do not know what kind of refund they will receive from that fund.

For Government Members, it is simply called action, Mr. Speaker. It is simply called deciding that they are now a Government and are not here to act Henny Youngman or Lenny Bruce and do a stand-up comedy routine in the House of Commons every day. Government Members should be trying to provide some leadership on major agricultural problems. We know that nothing is more important than getting cash in the hands of the farmers at a time when they need it. That time, Mr. Speaker, is now. Farmers need that money now, not after some consultation and not after another white paper.

I can only suspect that the real strategy of the Conservative Government is to help the pulp and paper industry. All of this is designed to bring employment back to the pulp and paper industry. No Government in the history of this country had produced so much paper read by so few people containing so little that no one knows about what they are consulting.

A constituent of mine went to the Queen's Printer and asked for one of the Government's consulting papers. The Queen's Printer said that that would cost \$18. We know with whom Government Members are consulting. They are consulting with their own bagmen and friends who can afford to pay that kind of price. They have no interest in consulting with the general public. They are not prepared to hold public hearings.