

*Routine Proceedings*

In terms of the one minute statements, I think there needs to be more than 15 minutes for one minute statements under Standing Order 31. There needs to be a better ability for members of Parliament to bring forward into the House certain concerns in their ridings. I do not know how it is in the other parties, but within our party we line up all the time just to get an issue on because unfortunately within the 15 minutes allotted, we on this side only get about four or five minutes.

As a result there needs to be more time spent within the day even if we have to tack it on at the end of the day to allow members of Parliament to have more than just a one minute say in those areas. With regard to reforming Question Period, there needs to be a lot more emphasis placed on the reform of Question Period.

I do not think that the government or this House have addressed these concerns at all. I do not believe that they have addressed the concerns of Canadians as to what this institution is all about and to how best to reform this institution to reflect their values and views of Canada.

Obviously across this country, and it is no different in my riding of Haldimand—Norfolk, the main concern of Canadians today is jobs and the downturn of the economy. I do not think that this House or this government over the past few years have addressed the concerns of Canadians.

Canadians are scared. They are scared either because they do not have a job or because they cannot find a job. They are wondering where their next meal is going to come from or they are concerned for the job that they have. In fact they believe that the recession may not be over. Whether we are in government or not, they blame members of Parliament for not being able to solve this problem.

I have had a number of constituents come to me and say: "You have 296 people in there. Can you not put your minds together to actually come up with some solution to these tough times? Can you not all sit down and agree to some sort of agreement as to at least one single plan in order to move forward and give Canadians jobs and opportunities?"

Of course, I tell them that it is not that easy. We in opposition have a difficult time in terms of convincing a

majority government. Granted even putting some blame back on us does not sometimes seem to come forward with a lot of solutions either. I think a lot of times we are all to blame in this House.

Some of the stuff we talk about here does not seem to be directly related to what our constituents want us to talk about. But the main focus they want in this Chamber is to move toward putting Canadians back to work. I do not believe that we as a Parliament in this past session have been able to provide Canadians with any sort of ideas of how we can help solve this problem.

• (2200)

I would hope that after the upcoming election, once this Chamber is renewed and we have a number of new people maybe then the government of the day, which of course I hope will be on our side, will be able to come up with some of the solutions and ideas that Canadians are looking for.

In my area, along with employment and along with providing opportunities for Canadians in terms of education and in furthering their education to get employment, a lot of my constituents are concerned about the state of the agriculture industry.

In the past I have done a lot of talking about agriculture. I have always said that our farms are the most productive and adaptive in the world and that they provide high quality food. I think I will get agreement on all sides of the House that that is what they do.

Unfortunately we have seen over the past few years the decline of agriculture in Canada. We have seen at the international level major challenges and major attacks on agriculture. We have had our supply managed industries attacked. As my hon. colleague said earlier, there does not seem to be on the government side of this House any commitment to taking this fight right to the limit.

Unfortunately what we have seen is a government that has caved in at the GATT and has not been truly committed to keeping the supply managed industries. The agriculture minister in the past little while has made speeches and the different members of the government here made speeches which have not given any comfort that our supply managed commodities will continue.