

Hon. Eugene Whelan, did much for Canada's farmers and that considerable funds are earmarked each year to help Canadian farmers.

But if that was all they are saying we could congratulate the Progressive Conservative Government, but it goes farther and that is where we are concerned and must talk about it. I take this opportunity to voice our concern: In an underhanded manner they want to put a stop to this assistance and those grants to Canadian farmers. This is an economic document which states that the federal Government wants to reduce the deficit, that the federal Government wants to intervene less directly in the economy, and that by every means it seeks to cut down its expenditures. So in this economic statement, in those short few sentences about agriculture the Canadian Government is telling all farmers: We give you too much money, we are now giving you about \$700 million under price and income support programs, that is too much, we want to cut down a little. That is what has me seriously worried. I am not surprised to see that the various agricultural organizations are beginning to be quite concerned about the position taken by this Government.

Obviously the Government wants to take a new approach, and it says so: The new tripartite approach to red meat stabilization may be a good example of how both levels of government and the producers themselves can co-operate to develop improvements over former arrangements. What does that mean? It means that the Canadian Government now wants to make the provinces pay part of the bill and make the farmers pay part of the bill, while the Government will only pay one-third and probably reduce its assistance and subsidies to support prices and incomes in the agricultural industry.

I want to ask a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Will the next program to be affected not be the dairy policy? Is the Minister of Agriculture getting ready to cut back the \$300 million or so which have been allocated for many years, year after year, to support the Canadian dairy policy? Is the Minister of Agriculture not getting ready to put an end to this assistance which is absolutely essential for all industrial milk producers who, throughout the years, have received the assistance of the Canadian Government, not only to earn a decent living, but also to work in a sector where they could at least have some returns?

The document published by the Canadian Government entitled *A New Direction for Canada: An Agenda for Economic Renewal* suggests that the Government is getting ready to cut back its agricultural support programs and I find this quite unacceptable. I would like to say this to the Minister of Agriculture: You are about to rush Bill B-25 through the House in spite of the opposition of Quebec farmers and of several provincial governments who said that they did not approve this Bill. However, I am telling you that if you touch the Canadian dairy policy, you have seen nothing yet. The protests and opposition provoked by your proposal to deindex

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pensions is nothing to what you will see if you try to touch the dairy policy.

Mr. Speaker, I do not understand this Government which, after its victory on September 4, said that we were beginning a new era of good relations and cooperation between the Canadian Government and the provinces. Why is it that the Minister of Agriculture wants to rush Bill C-25 through against all this opposition before the House adjourns? Why is it so urgent to adopt this Bill which has met with so much opposition?

The Hon. Member for Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead (Mr. Gérin) referred briefly earlier to those who appeared before the Parliamentary committee to make representations. I do not question the figures he has quoted and he named accurately some of the witnesses who appeared before the Parliamentary committee. However, I must point out to him that consultation means dialogue, that you speak to each other, that you ask each other questions and that you try to understand each other.

● (1920)

What consultation seems to mean for the Hon. Member for Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead (Mr. Gérin) is that the Government gave its opinion when introducing its Bill, all the witnesses who appeared before the committee raised objections to this Bill, but in spite of all that, the Government seems satisfied that it has consulted everyone. They introduced the Bill. All those who were consulted told them: It is no good. But the Government now says: We have consulted and we are going forward with our Bill without making any substantial amendments.

Earlier, an amendment presented by the Minister in committee was mentioned, but this amendment was rejected by Ministers from the Western provinces. We have been informed that the Alberta and Saskatchewan Ministers of Agriculture are against this amendment and that, in their opinion, it means absolutely nothing and does not meet their basic objections.

This amendment which so impressed the Hon. Member for Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead (Mr. Gérin) does not have the agreement or the approval of the Quebec Union des producteurs agricoles either. This amendment is much too timid and only creates confusion which will allow the Minister of Agriculture of Canada (Mr. Wise) to decide arbitrarily and alone how the tri-partite program will work. It does not allow the provinces to take part in the final decision. The Minister of Agriculture of Canada will decide alone whether or not a provincial program will be maintained or whether it will have to be abandoned even though doing so would be to the disadvantage of the farm producers of that province.

This is not a satisfactory amendment. It means that each farm producer in the provinces with existing programs are at the mercy of the whims and the fancy of the Minister of Agriculture, and this is totally unacceptable.