

Feed Grain

Mr. Alkenbrack: In the time allotted to me for questioning in the committee, I asked Mr. Coutu to inform the committee of the effects of the feed situation resulting from this vexing strike. As we know, it is preventing Quebec farmers and feeders obtaining badly needed feed grain from the elevators. The Liberal member for Kent-Essex (Mr. Daudlin) immediately asked the chairman of the committee, the hon. member for Saint-Jean (Mr. Smith), to rule me out of order and prevent the subject of my question being raised.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. In accordance with the ruling of the Chair a few moments ago, no mention must be made of what was said or done in the committee.

Some hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Alkenbrack: I hear shouts from members opposite, Madam Speaker. That is typical of the arrogance of Liberal members. I am not mentioning what the chairman said, but I will say that the chairman did not rule me out of order.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, on a point of order I want to bring it to your attention that you were quite right. If the hon. member was told he was out of order in the committee, he is out of order in this instance.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. I want to tell the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) that what is not allowed in the case of the hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington (Mr. Alkenbrack) is not allowed in the case of the hon. member for St. Boniface.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Alkenbrack: I did not report anyone's words; I was just reporting the actions of the Liberal members in that committee. This request by the hon. member for Kent-Essex shows how much the Liberal Party cares about the interests of the farmers and feeders of Quebec. It shows how much the hon. member for Kent-Essex cares about Canadian agriculture, though he comes from an important agricultural riding in western Ontario. How his action in the committee furthers the interests of agriculture, I cannot understand. It is typical Liberalism at its lowest ebb of mediocrity.

Mr. Whelan: On a point of order, I think it would be of interest if the hon. member were to make it clear that he was the only Conservative member attending the committee at that time, and that there were never more than two of them at the committee.

Mr. Alkenbrack: I did not say how many members were at that committee meeting; I am only saying how much the Liberal Party cares about the feed grain crisis.

● (0150)

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order. The hon. member for Pembina (Mr. Elzinga) is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Elzinga: On the same point of order, Madam Speaker, since the Minister of Agriculture has referred to the

[The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin).]

committee, may I point out to him that at prior meetings we have always outnumbered the Liberals.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): If the hon. member wants to waste another hour on an alleged point of order, I am ready to listen to him. That is not a valid point of order.

Mr. Towers: A point of order, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Alkenbrack: Madam Speaker, let them heckle all they want, it only shows their arrogance and their lack of concern for this crisis.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): If your party was concerned, there would be many more of your members in the House.

Mr. Alkenbrack: I congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion, my colleagues for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) and Joliette (Mr. LaSalle), and I thank you, Madam Speaker, for granting time for the debate. Mr. Coutu before the committee this afternoon informed the House that the situation is desperate.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member but no mention of what was said or done in a committee can be allowed at this time. Is the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Towers) rising on a point of order?

Mr. Towers: Yes, Madam Speaker. The point of order I should like to bring to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) through the Chair, is that apparently the government cannot manage the business of the House. The reason there were not more members in the agricultural committee this afternoon was because we were discussing agriculture in this chamber.

Mr. Whelan: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, yesterday afternoon when PFAA was under discussion in this House there were no more than four Conservative members in the chamber, so there were a lot of members who could have been in the agricultural committee.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): I suggest to all hon. members, and especially to the hon. member for Lotbinière, that it is highly irregular to talk about assiduity in the House at this time and during this debate. The hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington (Mr. Alkenbrack).

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

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): The hon. member for Lotbinière on a point of order.

Mr. Fortin: Thank you, Madam Speaker; I had not yet dealt with assiduity, but now that the Minister of Agriculture is here, instead of playing politics and accusing Progressive Conservative members of not being there, surely he should take advantage of this debate, thanks to the initiative of the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert), to advise us of the steps the government will take, instead of letting this debate continue forever and fruitlessly.