

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, May 18, 1984

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (1105)

## STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

### FARM CREDIT CORPORATION

#### INTEREST RATE CHARGES

**Mr. Mel Gass (Malpeque):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote a statement made by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) in which he assured us that he would cap interest rates at 12 per cent should he become the next Prime Minister. He said:

You have to have more stability in the interest rates to build the kind of confidence necessary for people to take the bold step into new ventures that they have on the drafting board ready to go.

In light of that statement, I am very upset and anxious to know why the Minister of Agriculture, who is responsible for the Farm Credit Corporation, has allowed the interest rate charged by the Farm Credit Corporation to rise from 12.75 per cent in April, 1983, to 14 per cent on April 9 of this year. Why will the Minister not honour his word, and cap interest rates at 12 per cent?

Not only are the interest rates set at 14 per cent but the Farm Credit Corporation has seen fit to change the method it uses to commute loan payments. It is now calculating the compound interest semi-annually rather than annually, which once again robs more money from the already struggling farmers. For example, on a \$100,000 mortgage with interest calculated annually, interest payments amount to \$15,098. The same interest payment calculated semi-annually, as is being done by the Farm Credit Corporation, amounts to \$15,526. The additional cost to the farmer calculated over a 20-year period is \$8,500 in interest.

The Minister of Agriculture is condoning this sneaky, underhanded method of squeezing even more money from the already distressed farmers. This terrible treatment of farmers is coming from a man who claims to be such a great benefactor of the farming community. This is just another example of how the present federal Government has treated the farmers of Canada, and really shows us just how much the Minister of Agriculture cares about Canadian farmers.

[Translation]

### POLITICAL PARTIES

#### SOLICITATION OF FUNDS BY PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

**Mr. Henri Tousignant (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, one of my constituents, in fact, one of my friends recently received a letter from the Progressive Conservative Party, inviting him to contribute at least \$100 or more. In doing so, he would become a member of the "select" club of friends of the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Mulroney) and enjoy special privileges. Those privileges, as indicated in the letter, would include: frequent meetings with the Leader, a limited number of members in the club. He would also have the privilege of having his name appear on a special list of donors.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Leader of the Official Opposition would care to inform the House, for the benefit of all Canadians, what exactly a special donors' list is. Perhaps he could also tell us whether this donors' list will be administered by the Member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle).

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[English]

### RAILWAYS

#### TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES—DANGER TO URBAN AREAS

**Mr. Alex Patterson (Fraser Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, the continuing derailments, and accidents on our roads, streets, highways and railways are a constant reminder of the dangers inherent in the transportation of dangerous substances. To underscore the concern shared by local governments, I call attention to a resolution presented by the Chilliwack, British Columbia, District Council to the Lower Mainland Municipal Association. That resolution reads as follows:

Whereas the national railways are undertaking major track upgrading programs;

And whereas existing mainlines often pass through urban areas with consequent risks associated with hazardous material transport, contributing to traffic problems at level crossings, and creating dust and noise nuisances;

And whereas rail corridors in rural areas can diminish the above problems and reduce infrastructure costs borne by local governments;

Therefore be it resolved that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities request the Government of Canada to provide incentives to encourage the national railways or other rail carriers to bypass urban areas where feasible, in conjunction with twin tracking and other upgrading programs, and where not feasible, for the railways to provide a greater share of the funding for grade separation.

In order that the objectives of this resolution as it affects the residents of the District of Chilliwack and other areas may be