

in Winnipeg at the annual meeting of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture the minister responsible for the Wheat Board announced a bright future for the western wheat growers.

At that time, if my memory does not fail me, the Canadian government had proposed acreage reductions in order to set up a quota system ensuring better control of the grain production in the West, and guaranteeing to grain producers not only decent prices but also incomes in relation with the amount of work they must spend on the operation of their farm.

At that time, this is what the minister told us:

The future prosperity of our grain producers in western Canada requires a significant reduction of our present wheat surplus and the only way of achieving this objective is to carry out acreage reductions, and while reducing our wheat surplus we must also make sure we do not have surpluses of other crops.

Mr. Speaker, all of us felt that this policy could be beneficial, at a certain time, but we have had to realize that it was not so for the western grain producers or the eastern milk producers, nor for the swine breeders or poultry farmers or egg producers. At present, the situation is tragic. I believe the federal cabinet as well as those who are concerned with agricultural problems, are in a position to find that the situation is the same in eastern Canada, in the Maritimes, in Quebec and in Ontario.

In fact, many hog farmers lose money producing pork meat or breeding piglets because of transportation problems while cereals are sold in the east at impossible prices, with the result that production costs increase in the eastern part of the country without at the same time and in a normal way favouring western cereal producers.

This means that eastern farmers do not get the share of the national income to which their activity entitles them while grain farmers in the west are also the victims of a situation detrimental to their interests.

That is why we must work hand in hand to make the situation known to the government and ask it to apply the policy in which it believes since it made the Canadian Parliament vote those bills by showing that Bill C-239 aimed at ensuring some stability in the income of western grain producers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Bill C-244 brought before Parliament in 1970 contained the following provisions:

His Excellency the Governor General has recommended to the House of Commons the present measure respecting the stabilization of prairie grain sale proceeds; to provide for the calculation, authorization and rate of stabilization payments to actual producers resident in Canada; to establish the Prairie Grain Stabilization Account in the Consolidated Revenue Fund; to provide for a levy to be deducted from all grain sale proceeds; to provide for refunds of over-payments of levy and for the payment of the amount of any deficit including interest of the Canadian Wheat Board relating to the grain and pool period that closed or closes on or after July 31, 1970;...

Now, under the provisions of this bill introduced in the House as a prodigious means of assuring to western grain producers some guarantee of stability, we have deemed appropriate, as parliamentarians and after having received the proper explanations, to give it our agree-

#### *Withholding of Grain Payments*

ment and, today, it is the producers themselves who complain about its non application.

Another legislation, Bill C-239, entitled "An Act to amend the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act" was passed by this House, and I believe that it is the failure to implement this act which has incited the western grain producers to show their dissatisfaction with the situation, and with reason. In fact, the ministers concerned by the motion are directly responsible for this situation, and it is up to Parliament to seriously consider this problem so as to enlighten this government on this situation, so that a profitable solution be brought as soon as possible.

When there are farming problems concerning the western grain producers or the farmers in the Maritimes, in Quebec or Ontario—be it a matter of dairy products, egg production, fowl meat or pork—one would think that the Canadian government does not want to bother with it, and that is regrettable.

• (9:06 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, we have recently seen conditions which could affect part of the Canadian people. I refer indeed to the American surcharge on Canadian imports. Now, the government immediately sought the advice of its legal advisers and of all its experts in order to develop a policy which would lessen the disastrous effects of that tax policy on Canadian imports.

I agree with the government that in such circumstances we must take very quick decisions and it is probably why the government introduced in the House the bill which we studied last week to ensure the stability of employment in Canada, as mentioned in the bill.

I agree with all that, but we must not neglect at the same time another form of economic activity in Canada, that is agriculture which not only affects the grain producers themselves, but also the organized trade, our co-operatives, our western and eastern beef producers as well as all other spheres of production in eastern Canada. In short, this policy could prove disastrous for the whole country if income security is not ensured all classes of our society.

I feel that in this debate, we should prove our sense of responsibility, and I trust that tomorrow perhaps the government will take the necessary steps to implement this measure and see to it that the western grain producers receive their due without delay.

Mr. Speaker, we live in a vast country, in which there are ten provinces, where various tongues are spoken. In eastern Canada, when Parliament passes measures favouring the western producers, we meet people who, perhaps for political reasons, take advantage of this situation and tell Quebecers or New Brunswickers: "All your tax money is going out to western Canada". And today, we see that western farmers make representations in this House and say to the government: "We have not received what we were entitled to under the law".

Western farmers are dissatisfied and at the same time eastern farmers are displeased because they were told that all the money is going to the west. Enough is enough, Mr. Speaker. We have to lay our cards on the