

maintain the rights... and if the hon. member for Shefford (Mr. Rondeau) came more often to the agriculture committee sessions, where I never see him, he would realize why perhaps all parties in this House agree that he is one of the best. In that committee, work gets done without fights.

● (0250)

I would now say a few things while the minister is there. The opposition will think I speak for the first time. What I shall say every Liberal member has said, because we know when to ask for measures. But I shall make to the Minister of Agriculture a suggestion we all put up together. On that, I ask the member for Joliette to convince the members in his party, in order to avoid repetition of this present hardship to the Quebec farmers and also to the Quebec consumers. I recommended three years ago to the agriculture committee that the Canadian Feed Board be given more powers, as mentioned by the hon. member for Portneuf (Mr. Bussières) and the member for Gatineau (Mr. Clermont). The first ones to object were the Progressive Conservatives. Let us not forget it was the western ones. At one time I would have liked the member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle) to rise...

Mr. Boulanger: He resigned at that time.

Mr. Côté: No, that's true, he was in the opposition.

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle), on a point of order.

Mr. La Salle: I shall be very brief, Mr. Speaker, and mostly very practical. The hon. member for Richelieu (Mr. Côté) is inviting me to rise on this question; I would like to remind him that they have been in power for about 30 years and that they should stop creating opposition about things that they have not themselves realized. You have the power, you should solve these problems!

Mr. Côté: Thank you for this reminder—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

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

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Lotbinière on a point of order.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Richelieu says that as a government member, he has many more effective means of action than the opposition and he also says that three years ago, he recommended more power for the Canadian Livestock Feed Board. I would like him to explain to me what use government members are if he was not able to convince his own solid government to implement this idea three years ago.

Mr. Côté: First of all, I shall reply to the question of the hon. member for Joliette who did not let me finish. I was not accusing him of not having risen. He could not rise to make representations on behalf of his party because he did not belong to it at the time—

Mr. Boulanger: He had resigned.

Feed Grain

Mr. Côté: If he had let me finish, I would have told him that I was not accusing him. I was saying what I would have wanted at the time. Now I think that he may have the chance soon to convince his colleagues to support us so that we may be unanimous in the agriculture committee. In reply to the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) I would say that if we were not so efficient, they would have increased their representation in the last elections. It is in the province of Quebec that farmers told us that we were capable, us Liberals, that we had the best solutions. The people said so, not us.

● (0300)

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the possibility of agriculture in eastern Canada relying on at least 10 million bushels of wheat from the Wheat Board which has them available for international trade and supplies for internal consumption in eastern Canada. But the Canadian Wheat Board sees to it that there are available supplies and means of transport for shipping it in eastern Canada and in the four corners of the country.

So, in support of what my hon. colleague from Gatineau (Mr. Clermont) and the other one from Portneuf (Mr. Bussières) are saying, this problem has been existing for three years now. Two years ago the grain handlers began to strike in the fall. Last year we were concerned with petroleum. This year we are not having quite the same problem, but we fear a shortage. Farmers have that feeling even if there is still grain in eastern Canada. Such fears, such apprehensions encourage speculation from dealers.

If there were any available... I do not know who would be paying the bill. I am not sure about that. Would it be the farmers' organizations, either the APU or the provincial government. What matters is that this grain would be in eastern Canada and would be shipped before the closing of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Thus it would cost us less to ship this grain by boat than by rail. So we would be sure that if there is speculation during a strike it would not be to the detriment of farmers.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say for those who perhaps are not listening to us but who will be reading about it in the newspapers that at the present time there are injunctions—

An hon. Member: Injunctions.

Mr. Côté:—yes, injunctions and thank you. Injunctions have been claimed, but unfortunately, the injunctions claimed to date have been asked for by bodies which buy grain to resell it to farmers. The farmer has not asked for injunctions. I have asked representatives of the FPA this afternoon, and I hope that the farmers in the Trois-Rivières area, who own large quantities of grains, will ask themselves for injunctions, several of them. They might not be respected, but at least if the farmer as such, the one who is really involved, would ask for injunctions, there might be some pressure on the government, on the state, on the provincial government, for as far as the Department of Justice is concerned, at the provincial police level, laws are not complied with, and pressure will be put to bear on this jurisdiction. In Ottawa, the federal government will be urged to settle problems, not by incurring a reprimand