

Private Members' Business

followed very closely because I, along with other members of this House, would like to see one comprehensive policy that will ensure not only their survival but promote their prosperity. We believe that would be not only good for the farmers of this country; it would be good for all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to the motion presented by the hon. member for the New Democratic Party, that in the opinion of this House, the government should consider introducing measures to amend the Western Grain Stabilization Act, so that producers will be eligible for certain programs, even if they do not sell the grain they harvest.

Madam Speaker, I read the motion only a few minutes ago, but I decided to take a few moments to support this motion because the subject has been raised by farm producers in my riding. In fact, in my riding, producers are not covered by the Western Grain Stabilization Act but by the Agricultural Stabilization Act. I am told there was an amendment to the motion, to include the Agricultural Stabilization Act. I therefore welcome this opportunity to support the amendment, as well since if the legislation is amended as proposed in the motion and in the amendment, farm producers in my riding will be eligible for coverage when they use their crops to feed their own livestock.

• (1730)

The problem is as follows, Madam Speaker. A farmer can raise certain crops, sell them and, of course, be eligible for the stabilization programs I just mentioned. If a producer has his own livestock, the crops used to feed his livestock are not eligible for the same coverage. This puts farm producers who raise crops and livestock at a disadvantage, compared with producers who specialize in only one of these areas. That is why I felt I had to take a few minutes to show my support for this initiative, and I hope this debate will not take too long and that we will have a positive vote on this motion. Of course, I hope the amendment will be passed so that areas in Eastern and Central Canada will also benefit. And then, of course,

the motion as amended can enjoy the support of more members of the House and help more Canadian farmers.

I just heard the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice say in his speech—and I hope that I am summarizing faithfully what he told us—that we could not consider this bill apart from all kinds of other government initiatives. It may be true that some other government initiatives help some other agricultural sectors, but I must still point out that the livestock industry, for example, is very cyclical, with ups and downs. In view of this, I think that the House should adopt this motion and encourage the government to make the desired changes to the program. So, Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me too to join those who want this motion and the amendment passed.

[*English*]

Mr. René Soetens (Ontario): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today on this motion put forward by the hon. member for Mackenzie which states in part: "That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of introducing". That is a typical motion that is usually put by opposition members. It does not give any direction to the government. If the motion had stated that the government "should introduce measures", rather than just "consider the advisability" that would have been more appropriate.

Mr. Boudria: It would have been out of order.

Mr. Soetens: What I have is a more appropriate response to the issue that the member is trying to raise. It is not just the matter of the issue of the Western Grain Stabilization Act.

The federal government is currently undertaking a very comprehensive review of all of the agriculture policies in Canada. The goal of the review is to work with industry, the provinces, and with producers, in particular, to map out a national policy for Canadian agriculture.

The review includes all farm safety-net programs. The issue of how farm-fed grain should be dealt with under grain income stabilization programs is under discussion.

I am sure, as you can hear, Madam Speaker, there are many members who are already cheering the very wise