

Agricultural Stabilization Act

shocking extreme. He said earlier that we had no caucus. Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member's predecessor at least had some backbone, and when he spoke in the House, he was not concerned about party lines.

I would like to ask the Hon. Member what he thinks about the credibility of the UPA, considering that the Nicolet UPA had a delegation here yesterday, knocking on the doors of all Progressive Conservative Members to show its complete disapproval of Bill C-25.

Mr. Gérin: So you knew the Hon. Member I defeated at the last election? The pork producers in my riding went to see him at the last election, and he had a nice little pig he brought along. Maybe the Hon. Member for Richmond-Wolfe (Mr. Tardif) was there. Well, let us not talk about that. Let us get down to serious matters. Look at what Mr. Scalabrini says, a guy from my riding you can trust, speaking of pork producers. I would say the problem in the pork industry is not necessarily stabilization, whether federal or provincial. The problem is overproduction. The warning light is on. It is time to stop and try and get a nationwide consensus to see where we are going, perhaps reduce our production or find some other solution. Pork producers want to meet and discuss these problems together. Help us help them. Let us make it unanimous so we can all try and help them find a solution. That is what we are asking you to do.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The period provided for questions and comments has now expired. Debate. The Hon. Member for Papineau (Mr. Ouellet).

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak at the third reading stage of Bill C-25. I see the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council is surprised at my presence in the House during a debate on agricultural legislation. I may remind him that since 1972, I have had annual meetings with representatives from the agricultural industry in the province of Quebec. Every year since 1972, the first year I attended a convention of the Union des producteurs agricoles du Québec in Drummondville, where I did not have the pleasure of meeting—

Mr. Gérin: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, please. The Hon. Member for Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead (Mr. Gérin), on a point of order.

Mr. Gérin: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I think the Hon. Member for Papineau (Mr. Ouellet) should talk about the future instead of the past.

Mr. Ouellet: Mr. Speaker, I have plenty of time. If the Hon. Member for Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead (Mr. Gérin) wants to raise frivolous points of order, he is just diminishing the impact of his speech. I was about to say, when the Hon.

Member interrupted me, that Quebec's farm producers, and especially the UPA representatives I have met on many occasions, realize that year after year, together with our fellow members from the rural ridings of Quebec, we have fought major battles to protect the interests of Quebec's farm producers. The reason we have a large and prosperous dairy industry, an industry and a policy that are the envy of dairy producers all over the world, is because Quebec Liberal Members have been working for years to ensure that this dairy policy is both fair and generous to dairy farmers. Quebec has experienced unprecedented expansion in the agricultural sector because Liberal Party Members, and especially Liberal Members of Parliament, have been fighting for years to ensure that producers in Quebec and Eastern Canada are able to obtain sufficient quantities of feed grains at competitive prices, to help them maintain their production and compete not just with other Canadian producers but also with foreign producers on Canadian and world markets.

In this debate on third reading of Bill C-25, I cannot help referring to the document tabled by the Progressive Conservative Government, entitled: "A new direction for Canada". A program for economic renewal, that in pages and pages of text contains only a few paragraphs, not even a whole page on agriculture. I am sure that all farm producers in Canada, whether they are from Quebec or the Maritimes, from Ontario or Western Canada, have read this document published by the Progressive Conservative Government which discusses a new direction for Canada and provides an agenda for economic renewal, while showing so little concern for the problems and demands of our farmers.

● (1910)

As I said, hardly one page on agriculture, but how dangerous and how significant it is, Mr. Speaker, and I will quote briefly one of those paragraphs:

Canada is a leading force in the world agricultural marketplace. Agriculture is a pillar of the economy in the west, and the mainstay of many communities in the east. The sector has demonstrated its resilience in responding to change to an extent probably unmatched by other industries.

Fancy words and compliments for the farmers of Canada. But where this gets serious is when the Progressive Conservative Government states, and I quote:

However, government involvement, both federal and provincial, is significant. In addition to substantial regulatory intervention, annual federal budgetary allocations to the sector amount to some \$1.35 billion through Agriculture Canada. Of this, some \$700 million is devoted to price and income supports.

So what is the meaning of that, Mr. Speaker? It means that, in its economic statement, the Progressive Conservative Government acknowledges the vitality of the agricultural sector. It acknowledges that Agriculture Canada does spend a lot of money each year for the Canadian agricultural community. In other words, this Progressive Conservative Government admits that the previous administration did well. They admit that the Liberals, the predecessor of the Minister of Agriculture, the