

*Agricultural Stabilization Act*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

**AFTER RECESS**

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** When the House rose at one o'clock, the Hon. Member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Boudria) had the floor.

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, if I remember correctly, at one o'clock we had all agreed that the Parliamentary Secretary was indeed very courageous for having told the Prime Minister in this House that the Prime Minister had not respected his campaign promises and that the Parliamentary Secretary was going to see to it that he did so in the future. I believe that was the point at which we were when the House rose. I simply wanted to refresh everyone's memory to that effect.

We are indeed very proud of the Hon. Member and we are glad to see that at least one Tory Member is willing to stand up to this nasty Government.

**Mr. Blais:** Do you agree?

**Mr. Boudria:** I am in agreement with the Hon. Member when he says that the Prime Minister has not delivered on his promises. I am in full agreement with him when he says that and I want the record to show that.

There are a number of other issues which we should raise here today while discussing the entire issue of price stabilization and how prices of commodities in particular need to be enhanced. The Parliamentary Secretary will undoubtedly know that there is a tremendous threat, particularly to the beef industry, from foreign imports.

It is interesting that this discussion is being brought to light now after the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion (Mr. Stevens) made what could almost be called a free trade speech yesterday. I do hope that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Blais) will be able to respond by assuring all Hon. Members that the previously fixed quota of 5.9 million pounds of imported beef will be respected and that Canadian producers and farmers will not find themselves in a very difficult situation, which will undoubtedly affect them if the quotas are increased to 17 million pounds. As I said previously, this, of course, would have a depressing effect on the prices.

● (1410)

So I am looking forward to the comments of the Parliamentary Secretary with respect to the imports of beef from the European Economic Community, because we know that in terms of price stabilization, it does not matter what we do to prices if we are going to keep on flooding the market with

subsidized imports. We could have subsidies of 75 cents a pound on beef, but if someone has double our subsidy, we will never be able to compete. Obviously, we have to be assured that the quotas of beef from the European Economic Community will be left at the level which had been previously set. I believe it was in the order of 5.94 million pounds, and not the 17 million pounds which the rumour mill has us now faced with.

These are some of the issues I wanted to raise, and I just want to refer briefly to the pork producers in the area I represent. I received a letter from a pork producer in my riding on March 22.

[Translation]

I would like to read part of the letter, Mr. Speaker. I want the Parliamentary Secretary to be aware of this, he who said earlier that agriculture is one of the Government's priorities, that the Government wants the House to proceed with the study of Bill C-25 so it will become law. As I pointed out a moment ago, we know that the Government has been dragging its feet for months about Bill C-25, and I am sure the Parliamentary Secretary will agree with me that the Government behaviour is totally unacceptable.

Here is what one of my constituents wrote to me in a letter dated March 22:

There have been many newspaper articles about Bill C-25 to amend the Agricultural Stabilization Act. We do not know anything about this Bill, but we hope that problems related to pork production will be dealt with so that:

(1) pork will be included in the list of "named commodities"—

And so it is. I continue the quotation:

(2) assistance will be geared to the cost of production—

So a farmer in my region told us he wants the assistance to be geared to the cost of production, not to the resale price as is the case now. Apparently, this opinion is shared by some producers in other provinces. Needless to say, we cannot have at the same time a program tied to the cost of production and a program tied to the resale price. It has to be one or the other, and it is not always possible to have the kind of program mentioned by my constituent.

Be that as it may, Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that my constituent was wondering about the Bill last March 22. He wanted to know why nothing more had been heard about Bill C-25 which was introduced on January 24, I think. Well, we never did hear anything more about the Bill after January 24, but here we are today, Mr. Speaker, May 17, and we are just beginning to talk about Bill C-25. I would like the Parliamentary Secretary to be aware of that fact.

I am sure you remember this, Mr. Speaker, but in case you are not too sure, I will try to refresh your memory. This morning the Parliamentary Secretary talked about our deficits. He said that agriculture is stagnant as a result of deficits and useless expenditures which, he said, were attributable to the previous Government. Well, Mr. Speaker, you know that I