

obey the laws of Canada and the legislation that we, legislators, adopt here in Parliament?

Madam Speaker, I did not interrupt the hon. member for Joliette when he made his speech tonight and I hope he will extend the same courtesy to me and let me make my comments.

The situation is serious and we do not need, as the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouellet) said tonight, to be told about it by the member for Joliette. We do not spend our lives in the clouds, but on the ground and in the province of Quebec. We know the difficulties the farmers have and that the present strikes are creating.

The government will take its responsibilities and, as far as I am concerned, and such was the purpose of the question I asked yesterday, I hope that when all means have been exhausted in an attempt to settle this dispute, I hope that the means used in similar circumstances will be taken as quickly as possible.

The second reasons that prompts me to take part in this debate, Madam Speaker, is that farm animals are not the only ones to be looked after at the present time. I represent the people of Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine, and for those who realize what an island is, they will learn perhaps, if they don't already know it, that the people I represent must bring in all their winter supplies before the closing of the shipping season in the fall, because once the shipping is stopped, they cannot think of bringing in supplies except by plane at a prohibitive cost.

Then, when the shipping season opens, the CTMA ships of the Magdalen Islands are berthed in the port of Montreal since the previous fall. All the merchants put in their orders, everyone orders whatever goods he needs; when one is isolated, one knows how important to those people to see the start of the navigation season.

So, now, those boats are standing, waiting in the ports of Montreal and Quebec City. They are kept from loading the supplies so urgently needed in the Magdalen Islands. Trucks are even stopped which come to the hangars to drop their loads; they have to turn around. The situation is this: not only will the animals not have feed in the near future, since a telegram said 24 hours in the case of poultry, but the population of the Magdalen Islands is about to suffer seriously from the longshoremen's strike. That is why, Madam Speaker, after all I said a while ago, I ask again the stevedores, and in this I join the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner) and those of my colleagues who spoke before me, I ask the stevedores to show some human decency, some sense of charity towards those people; I ask them, if they want their rights to be respected, to at least show respect for the rights of others, and allow the goods being sent to those islands to be put on board the ship which is waiting only for their permission, that the stevedores at the hangars where those goods are loaded for the islands, who are not on strike, might do their work and send the "Madelinots" the food, the clothing and all they need to go to work at this time of year, and so help these people who have been inactive and unemployed throughout the winter.

Feed Grain

● (0140)

[Translation]

Mr. A. D. Alkenbrack (Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Madam Speaker, I feel it is my duty to help my colleagues with this current problem, in the middle of the night, to speak about the shortage of feed grains in the province of Quebec. What harms this province, harms the whole country, and especially the farming industry and the people who depend on it for their livelihood.

[English]

Only last week we were informed of the government's plan to play a useful role in helping to feed a starving world—regions and countries whose people are in dire need of food. Yet tonight we look to a government which will not even see to it that our own food production is maintained. I have been speaking to a number of members from the province of Quebec and they have all told me—even those on the Liberal side—that it is time to do something.

This afternoon in the agriculture committee we were told by Mr. Coutu, president of the Canadian Pork Council—he is also president of the Fédération Producteurs de Porc de Québec—that the situation is very serious. But still the government does nothing. It has been pointed out by more than one speaker throughout this long night that there is not one member of the cabinet present during this debate.

An hon. Member: That is not so.

Mr. Alkenbrack: There is none in his seat at the present time.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) is here.

Mr. Alkenbrack: The absence of ministers shows that the government cares nothing for the interests of the farmers and feeders of Canada, and particularly of Quebec. This Liberal arrogance was also manifested in the agriculture committee yesterday afternoon. I was present at the meeting, along with my hon. friend for Pembina (Mr. Elzinga). The witnesses were members of the Canadian Pork Council, headed by their president Mr. Coutu, as I have mentioned.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. I must remind the hon. member that no report of what was said in the committee can be made in the House tonight.

Mr. Alkenbrack: All right; I have not made any report of what was said in the committee.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): On a point of order, Madam Speaker, I should like to call your attention to the fact that the Minister of Agriculture has been right here with us. He just happened to move from one area of the House to another to get back to his seat.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): The hon. member knows very well that what he has referred to is not a point of order.