

International Grains Arrangement

than we have witnessed to date in order to ensure an adequate price level for Canadian wheat producers.

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[Translation]

Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, the minister has just made a statement on the report of the Wheat Conference held in Geneva, and I am sorry to say that I have just received a copy of it.

The minister has stated that the United Nations Wheat Conference had been convened to conclude a successor agreement to the International Grains Agreement which included a Wheat Convention and a Food Aid Convention. He has also stated that there was no concurrence for the simple reason that the other countries would not decrease their subsidies.

This is what surprised me, Mr. Speaker. We think that Canada is the third wealthiest country in the world and when our country tries to come to an agreement with nations that are considered poorer, it cannot be done because those nations assist their producers to a greater extent by way of subsidies. And instead of announcing a decision to raise subsidies to the same level as the other countries and thus achieve perfect agreement, the government persists in giving farmers nothing, in not increasing assistance to production, and then tells the House: We were not able to come to an agreement. The government seems content to state: After all, we had good discussions, there has been constructive agreement on Canadian business. Such an attitude astounds me, Mr. Speaker. Having first told us that the conference was a failure, the Minister then says it has been very constructive for Canadian business. We know, however, that it was destructive for Canadian producers. I wonder how he was able to come up with such a conclusion. Anyway, the government always reaches such conclusions, whatever level of production is involved. It is always satisfied when giving as little money and help as possible to producers. We have here one more example of that attitude.

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[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS**UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES—REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO MOVE MOTION UNDER S.O. 43**

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, I ask the unanimous consent of the House to put a motion on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity.

The necessity arises as a result of the surreptitious introduction by the government of a new method of calculating the seasonally adjusted rate of unemployment. Throughout 1970, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for each month was calculated according

[Mr. Burton.]

to a statistical program called X-9. Some time before the end of 1970, the government ordered that a new statistical method of calculation be put into effect on January 1, 1971. This statistical program is called X-11. As a result, the seasonally adjusted rate of unemployment for January, released today to the public, the press and Members of Parliament, is calculated according to formula X-11. The government, by this deliberate and furtive switch of statistical horses in midstream, has lowered the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January from the rate that exists under the method heretofore used by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics; the government has attempted to deceive the public, the press and Members of Parliament by hiding its adoption of this formula—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have to interrupt the hon. member. He will recognize that he is reiterating essentially the point made earlier this afternoon by the hon. member for Peace River who made a statement suggesting that a grievance should be put to the House by way of a question of privilege. The hon. member is aware of the limitations placed on him at this time by the terms of Standing Order 43. He cannot make a general statement. I have expressed the thought on earlier occasions that if hon. members were entitled, when moving a motion under Standing Order 43, to make a general statement it would only be equitable that someone on behalf of the other side should be allowed also to make a statement, and that certainly would be contrary to the spirit of Standing Order 43.

The Standing Order is clear enough. The hon. member has to explain briefly the reasons for urgency. He cannot make a statement of a general nature of the kind he is making at the present time. I invite him to indicate as soon as possible the terms of the motion he proposes for the consideration of the House.

Mr. Lundrigan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I assure you that my words are well chosen to set out the very basic reason for my motion.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lundrigan: Just one last sentence.

Some hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Lundrigan: The government has prevented the public and the press from making meaningful comparisons between the 1970 rates and the 1971 rates. I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski):

That this House condemn the government's manipulation without notice of the seasonally adjusted rate of unemployment in an attempt, deliberately calculated and intended to deceive the public, the press and Members of Parliament as to the disastrous effect of the government's unemployment policy—

Some hon. Members: Order!

An hon. Member: Pitiful.

Mr. Lundrigan:
—and further, that the government immediately distribute—

Some hon. Members: Order!