

Cash Assurance Program

ways. For example, the French text refers to the "assurance of revenue". From what the hon. member has said, however, I gather that it is an insurance program.

The motion also recommends that payouts be made on an individual basis. How would they monitor the return of each individual producer in order to make these payouts on an individual basis? What mechanics would the hon. member put in place to ensure that the producers are all treated fairly, regardless of their field of production? What mechanics, for example, would be in place to ensure that the dairy producers in eastern Canada would indeed receive the same treatment as the grain producers in western Canada?

I say this because it has been rumoured that the present government would like to change the status of the Canadian Dairy Commission which, in my view, would render it almost useless. Yet it has not been rumoured that this government would reduce the powers of the Canadian Wheat Board.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, that is one of the reasons why I say I have reservations with respect to the implementation of the terms of this motion.

As I just pointed out, if this government wants to restrict the powers of the Canadian Dairy Commission, there is no talk of restricting the powers of the Canadian Wheat Board, and this, I think, is a double standard system of this government that must be viewed with distrust. If the hon. member has any influence in his caucus, he should make sure first that such is not the case.

[English]

Could it be that the hon. member did not or could not convince the members of his caucus nor the Minister of Agriculture of the importance of equal treatment to all producers in Canada? Or could it be that out of sheer frustration the hon. member for Mackenzie introduced this proposal by way of a private member's motion? If that is so, then that is the second reason I commend the hon. member for the presentation of this motion.

When one considers the total mess in which the Minister of Agriculture has placed the chicken producers, I can understand why the members of his own party feel frustrated today. The present Minister of Agriculture has said on numerous occasions that import quotas are too high. I would like to quote from a farm journal called *Farm and Country*:

Import quotas for both beef and chicken are too high.

The article goes on to say:

—John Wise said bluntly. He explained that trade department officials convinced him our negotiators got the best chicken import deal they could from the U.S.

If that was the best deal that we could get, Mr. Speaker, then what would happen to our chicken producers had they received a raw deal? This is not the end of the nightmare for our producers. It is not enough that our producers got what I call a raw and rotten deal, but we are informed that the two large importers of chicken in this country, after the minister

[Mr. Ethier.]

had said that chicken and beef imports were way too high, had the gall to go back to the minister and ask for additional import quotas which, by the way, were granted.

An hon. Member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Ethier: I would like to remind the hon. member that his own minister has said that import quotas are too high. They cannot be too high if there are none. The hon. member cannot have it both ways—that when facing the producers he says it is too high, and when he is somewhere else he says there are no quotas. So far the minister has not been consistent, and that is why the hon. member for Mackenzie had to introduce the matter by way of a private member's motion. I do not think he has the support of his minister on that. Supplementary import quotas of 4.5 million pounds have been issued to a Maple Lodge firm. The same firm has made application to import 5.5 million pounds of chicken in the last three weeks, after the basic quotas were imposed. If this trend is followed, it is likely the government will give them this quota. That is why we should be very careful about the implementation of the hon. member's motion.

● (1730)

I wonder what part the Minister of Agriculture would play in all this, or would it fall to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. de Cotret) who knows nothing about farming but who apparently will have to sell farm products? The Minister of Agriculture has already told us that he would have nothing to say in this area as it falls under the authority of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

The hon. member has presented his motion in all sincerity, but probably out of a sense of frustration because nothing can be accomplished through the minister. I hope we will be able to get the message across to his colleagues in caucus.

This motion is a replica of what we wanted to introduce when we were the government, and that is, harmonizing of stabilization programs. Perhaps the Minister of Agriculture intends to support the motion, or could it be that he is too proud to acknowledge that his predecessor had prepared a good program on the harmonizing of stabilization programs? Would pride prevent him from following up on this program? If so, I beg him to lay his pride aside and implement the program prepared by the former minister of agriculture, the hon. member for Essex-Windsor (Mr. Whelan).

I am sure the hon. member for Mackenzie is very sincere when he presents this motion. He would seem to say that all hon. members on the government side strongly support marketing boards. If that is so, I hope the Prime Minister (Mr. Clark) and the Minister of Agriculture will say so publicly, and agree that marketing boards are here to stay or until we have a stabilized or rationalized market system in this country. I hope they both will say that they support marketing boards.

It has been suggested that this motion should receive unanimous consent so that the subject could be studied further, and that is something I would endorse. In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the hon. member for his courage in bringing