

Business of the House

crisis this spring. So far, not one dollar has been paid because provinces have not been able to come up with their share of the money.

This morning, the Associate Minister of Agriculture for Saskatchewan, Mr. Harold Martens, said: "We are not in a position where we can back down. The other two Prairie provinces feel the same way and producers are saying we're right in what we're doing".

In view of the stalemate, can the Deputy Prime Minister say how and when the money is going to be paid to these farmers facing serious financial crisis with seeding about to begin?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am indeed very encouraged by the fact that the government of Ontario, the Minister of Agriculture specifically, has made a commitment to work with us in terms of the program that was announced. It is encouraging to note that some \$48 million was allocated to farmers to help offset the income deficiency of this particular year. Those discussions are ongoing at the present time between our officials to ensure that that program is executed.

• (1500)

The Government of Saskatchewan has to provide an interest rate relief program which will be eligible for matching funds. The Government of Manitoba is, I understand, prepared to do something in a similar vein. I will be meeting with the minister of agriculture and the provincial treasurer on Sunday to talk about details.

The Government of Alberta has announced a program specifically designed to alleviate the situation in the Peace River district. That program too will qualify for matching federal funds. Progress is being made, and as soon as we can identify the total package on the part of all the provinces, the matching funds will be forthcoming from the Government of Canada.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. The Deputy Prime Minister has outlined a scenario that should put the money from the federal government into the hands of farmers about July or August.

Can he tell us today where farmers are going to get the money to plant their crops, especially in the prairies and

areas of Ontario. Where does he propose that they get the money? The banks are holding them up and not providing funds on the basis of equity anymore, it has to be on the basis of cash flow and many of these crops will not provide cash flow. Where does he propose that the farmers get the money for this planting?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should not take issue with me or this government. Our money is on the table right now. There was \$500 million made available at the end of March.

If he has any complaints he should get on the phone to the ministers of agriculture of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan and ask them where their share of the money is because when it's there, ours will be there. We're ready today to help the farmers. I am not sure why the hon. member would want to deprive the farmers of provincial contributions which would match our dollars and which would get more money into the hands of the farmers.

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WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, it being Thursday, I would like to ask the Government House Leader if he could indicate to members the projected order of business for the coming days, Thursday and Friday and next week possibly.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): It is the intention today to start report stage of Bill C-15, the plant breeders' rights bill and to continue and hopefully to end debate on that tomorrow, Friday.

It would be our hope, and I think there is agreement of the other parties, that at the end of the day tomorrow, we might call for report stage of Bill C-43 in order to get the Chair's ruling on the amendments that have been filed. It would not be our intention to continue with any debate per se but merely to have the House informed of the amendments and their consideration and grouping by the Chair.

On Monday I would expect to resume second reading debate on Bill C-26, the At and East rate, hopefully to