

Mr. Downey: Yes, the bride. The minister thought he might get the bill through before this was realized, but the mail indicates differently. I do not recall receiving one letter asking me to support this stabilization program. There are piles of letters that indicate the opposite. People have seen through this program in record time. They know what a stabilized income based on today's costs will mean to them. It will mean disaster. They also realize that regardless whether the stabilization program goes through, on July 1 there will be a payment of something like \$60 million to the federal treasury under the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act. If PFAA is not discontinued there will be payments amounting to \$6 million or \$8 million. The government knows that this year they will not be net losers to a very great extent.

With regard to the allowance to be built into the program for escalating costs, I wish to quote from a U.S. publication, the Kiplinger Washington Letter, a business council. This is what they say will happen to prices within the next year:

A quick look at prices of things that are daily necessities:

Food is headed higher... perhaps 5 per cent above last year, well over what the government had expected earlier. Labor, transportation, packaging are the main reasons... they all cost more and make up 60 per cent of food prices—

The new autos will cost more too next fall... \$150-\$200 more... mostly for rising labour and materials costs and for added safety items—

And tires will cost more next month, an average of around 3 per cent, starting July 1. Perhaps up again by 3 per cent in fall. Buy now if you can.

All these are indicators of what will happen to prices in the months ahead.

Reminder on credit, borrowing: Do it NOW if you will need money in near future. There's plenty of money available. And interest rates are lower than they will be if you wait... they're poised to rise further. Lenders are itching to raise them. So why not beat them to the punch?

● (9:50 p.m.)

That is what the advisers in Washington are telling their customers they should be doing. In the face of our experience in agriculture over the past years, experience which has shown us that a three-plow tractor which in 1940 sold for \$1,200 may well now cost \$4,000 today, it is sheer suicide to speak of any plan which purports to stabilize agriculture in its present state without taking into consideration the substance of what is contained in the amendment, in other words, without providing for increases in production costs built into the program.

It is hard for me to understand that a minister coming from a western area, supposedly aware of the difficulties confronting agriculture, should shy away from these facts. I do not know whether the phrase "shy away" is the right one. Is he being influenced by his cabinet colleagues? I cannot understand why, ignoring the lessons of the past, he comes forward to say that building an escalator clause into the scheme would make the fund unworkable. What a sorry state we are in when we find thinking of this sort among western representatives in the House of Commons!

24171—40

Prairie Grain Stabilization Act

The position of many of the farm organizations has been stated. The *Union Farmer* reads:

The National Farmers Union today demanded changes in the prairie grains stabilization act to include provisions for protecting farmers from rising costs and declining incomes.

That is exactly what is sought in the amendment. I suggest to the minister that this is not a policy put forward by politicians alone but by representatives of the farmers who are most directly aware of the farm situation. I do not intend to speak any further today. The case has been very well put forward and I know there are other speakers who wish to present their views. If the minister has any ears at all he will be able to get the message loud and strong, whether from the people who represent agricultural constituencies in this House or directly from the farm organizations. I am sure they send mail to him as they do to us.

Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, speaking to the amendment we have put forward in connection with this bill I cannot but look across the way and see there the two western twins from the Prairies who are supposed to be defending the interests of the farmers—the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) and the Minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board (Mr. Lang). Last week the minister in charge of the Wheat Board announced a payment amounting to about 7 cents and the next day cheques were in the mail. That is about the most efficient service the farmers have ever received.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lang: It was the same day.

Mr. Skoberg: At the same time I point out that the Minister of Agriculture has done nothing for two years about the cost of farm machinery even though the eminent Dr. Barber has recommended that there should be an investigation under the Combines Investigation Act.

Mr. Olson: Stick to the facts. That is not true.

Mr. Skoberg: The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Basford) is in the House tonight and it appears that neither he nor the Minister of Agriculture are the slightest bit interested in preventing increased costs of production due to the inflated prices of farm machinery.

An hon. Member: Nonsense.

Mr. Skoberg: I hear one of the more vociferous people across the way say "Nonsense". Dr. Barber was not talking nonsense when he suggested an investigation should be carried out under the Combines Investigation Act. But the Liberal government and the minister responsible in this area show no concern about initiating an inquiry of the kind recommended.

It is ironic that the minister in charge of the Wheat Board, who seems to be in a great hurry to have this legislation passed, should tell us there are still inquiries going on into the cost of transportation, something which