

Mr. COLDWELL: As a matter of fact one province is being criticized and penalized to some extent because it has brought about a drastic reduction of debt in the province. I have stated already that Professor Hope says that on a farm of two sections or more, with superior soil and equipped with the latest type of machinery, wheat can be produced for 34 cents per bushel, neglecting debt and interest. But this would apply to only one per cent of the farms of Saskatchewan, according to Professor Hope in the same statement. I contend that to discuss this matter on the basis of large farms with superior soil is entirely wrong.

If these proposals regarding initial price are approved by this house it will mean that the farmer will continue to do what he has long done—work from daylight to dark with the unpaid labour of his wife and family to have the privilege of producing wheat at an average loss of 43 cents per bushel on the average farm with average soil and under average conditions. If this initial farm price of 47 cents should prove to be the maximum price, as I suspect it will, with a cost of production of 90 cents per bushel as given by Professor Hope, there would be a loss to the farmer of 43 cents per bushel. The minister said that he was opposed to a permanent policy of marketing through a wheat board and guaranteeing an adequate minimum price to the producer. In that he is at entire variance with us in fundamental thinking. I believe with world conditions such as they are, with international cartels and monopolies in a position to set prices irrespective of demand in the areas they serve—a demand which comes largely from the individual producer of commodities like wheat—the time has come, if these organizations are to be allowed to operate as they have been operating, when we must protect the worker by providing a minimum wage, and we must provide a minimum return to the farmer by adopting minimum and guaranteed prices that will be adequate to meet his cost of operation. I know that is a fundamental difference in thinking. When the original wheat bill was before the house Colonel J. L. Ralston, speaking in the house on the wheat board legislation, noted that it provided for a minimum guaranteed price, and that such was an emergency policy. Indeed he quoted Mr. Bennett as saying that it was not a permanent policy, and that even while it was in force it was subject to the government of the day. Upon that statement the government has, it seems to me, set aside a statute of parliament.

During the campaign of 1935, western Liberals stated that they supported the wheat

board, and some of them at least appealed to the electors on a policy of adequate prices for farm products, and that is why many of them are here to-day. It seems to me that in this debate members who represent western prairie wheat-growing constituencies ought to stand in their places in this house and express the opinions they hold regarding these matters and their opinions on these bills. It is no use going back to the prairie people and telling them that we wished to prorogue parliament. The business of the country must come first, and the people of the constituencies affected by this legislation will expect the members whom they sent to this house to express an opinion on their behalf in respect to these matters.

Mr. T. F. DONNELLY (Wood Mountain): Mr. Speaker, before making a few remarks on the measures now before us, Bill No. 83 and Bill No. 63, I wish to compliment the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) upon his speech of Friday last in introducing these two bills. It was a lucid, convincing and businesslike address. I wish also to compliment the government upon having brought down these two bills. Never before in my experience of thirteen years in this house has there been introduced into parliament a bill that has met with such universal favour in western Canada as Bill No. 83 is meeting at the present time. Even our friends to my left may be hearing from their part of the country. Certainly when they go back home they will hear a different story from what they are telling here; for every person I hear from in western Canada says: Whatever you do, do not give up this acreage bonus legislation, but see that Bill No. 83 goes through and becomes law. That is what I hear universally, from every section of the country.

In proposing this bill for an acreage bonus the government is following very good precedents, because we find the same thing is done in England. England gives assistance to her farmers on an acreage bonus plan. Let me quote from the *Commercial Intelligence Journal*, where at page 667 I find that H. A. Scott, Canadian trade commissioner, says:

United Kingdom Oats and Barley Subsidy Payment

The subsidy is arranged so that growers are compensated upon an acreage basis.

The minister now announces that in view of the fact that the average price of oats in the United Kingdom for the seven months ended March 31, 1939, was determined at 5 shillings