

provisions of that kind to improve the tax situation of the farmer.

In conclusion, let me say a few words regarding what hon. members opposite said concerning the lack of a farm policy. We amended the Agricultural Stabilization Act a couple of years ago to include production costs. I can recall many hon. members opposite decrying the fact that we are even looking at that. They certainly did not want to do anything which could be construed as stabilizing, putting in a floor price or in any way supporting the incomes of producers. We are very concerned about that. Many of them fought every inch of the way as we worked for years to implement the western grain income stabilization act. I am very happy—it must be because an election is coming or something—that my hon. friends opposite are suddenly realizing that we should seek new ways to bring about greater stability in the incomes of farm and food producers in this country.

Mr. Speaker, in view of the time and of my commitments to hon. members opposite, I will now conclude my remarks.

Mr. Frank Hamilton (Swift Current-Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the minister I was reminded of the story of the new reverend who went to the south west corner of Saskatchewan in the ranching country and on his first Sunday out there waited outside the church. Finally, one rancher showed up. As there were no more, they went inside, sang the hymn, preached the sermon and took the collection. Then the reverend went to the back of the church and met the rancher as he was leaving. He shook his hand, thought for a minute and said to the rancher: "Say, if you went out to feed your cattle and only one animal showed up, would you still feed it?" The rancher thought for a while and said: "Yes, I reckon I would, but I sure wouldn't give it the full load." Well, we sure got the whole load from the minister today.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hamilton (Swift Current-Maple Creek): The minister has been described as a bull who carries his own china shop. It is an apt description. Some time ago he told us to pray. Today he spoke about Christ. I have here the March issue of *Farm Light & Power* which contains an article headlined: "Farmers repeating Bible story"—written by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan). It recounts the Old Testament story of the Egyptian famine. The minister writes:

This is how I reconstruct that story:

... Joseph was appointed manager of the organization and bought up all the grain produced each year. But he instructed each farmer to hold back enough grain for seeding the next year.

So, for seven years the farmers planted their own grain, including all the weed seeds and diseased seeds. The weeds and diseases multiplied. After seven years, Joseph brought about the famine he had predicted.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I read a different message into that story.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hamilton (Swift Current-Maple Creek): The minister is always talking about levelling out the boom and bust cycles

in agriculture. This is what concerns us, because he has worked hard at it but so far has only managed to level out the boom periods. Today he compared the government to a ship. All I can say is that if this is the correct analogy, then farmers are certainly getting ready to take to the lifeboats.

With regard to the Farm Credit Corporation amendments, all I can say is: Bring them in, we will go to work on them.

The minister brags about marketing boards. My view from western Canada is that without exception they tend to reduce the number of producers. I grant you, Mr. Speaker, that the money is there, but the family farms are not, and that is the fastest way I know to depopulate our rural areas.

The minister spoke about the declining world price of grain responsible for the farm income slide. It is interesting to note right now that the top grade grain asking price in Vancouver is \$4.30 a bushel. And still his colleague, that economic virgin from Saskatoon, has the temerity to tell farmers that they will be receiving nothing above the \$2.75 initial price which they have already received. There is over \$1.50 a bushel difference between what the farmer has received and will receive for the rest of the crop year and what the grain is selling for at present. Is it any wonder that my party is asking to have the Auditor General take a look at the accounts of the Canadian Wheat Board?

About a week ago some 14 of my colleagues and I went up to Saskatoon to meet with Mr. Justice Hall and have a talk with him about the recommendations contained in the Hall report. We were aware that so far only six of the 92 recommendations have been implemented, five others have been partially acted upon, but no action taken on the rest. We were disturbed to find that neither the government nor the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) had ever contacted the chief architect of the Hall commission. Our main concern was that the piecemeal approach of this government to implement the report was jeopardizing the whole concept of Judge Hall's report, which was to try to improve the economic situation on the prairies and rationalize our primary grain handling system.

Another concern was that the prairie rail action committee set up by the Minister of Transport, instead of the prairie rail authority recommended by the commission, was just a stall which would put us right back where we were before the commission was established, back in the hands of the eastern controlled Canadian Transport Commission. We are concerned that the railways are receiving far too much taxpayers' money without having to account in any way for how that money is being spent.

We were also disturbed at the fact that there is no government policy to assist the prairie livestock feeding industry or the oilseed crushers by offsetting the low statutory rates on grain.

Our policy on the Hall report is very plain and it has been stated before. First, we believe that the low Crow statutory rate for the grain producers must stay; that the government must pick up the difference between the Crow rate and the compensatory rate; that a subsidy is required to remove the