

Prairie Farm Assistance

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): I do not wish to hold the matter up, but I would ask the minister to stop at the first section and give us a chance to discuss the general policy under that section.

Mr. GARDINER: Do I understand it is the desire of the house to let the first section stand and go on with some of the others or to let the whole bill stand?

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): Let the whole bill stand after we have got into committee.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Vien in the chair.

On section 1—Short title.

Mr. STIRLING: Could the minister take the opportunity here to give us some information with regard to the composition of the board?

Mr. GARDINER: During the last season a committee of three dealt with the same matters with which a board would be required to deal. One of the reasons why we did not put in a board last year was that we did not think this was the type of legislation that should be put under a board operating throughout the year. The board is only required at the time that the check is being made on the crop and only in such years as the check should be made on the crop. It was not the type of legislation that should be turned over to a permanent board which would be operating throughout the year and from year to year. It will become necessary, however, under the bill to set up a board each year. We had intended that the board would include, if there are three members, two officials of the department; one of them might be chosen from the staff of the Department of Agriculture, and another member might be selected from some of the other departments.

Mr. STIRLING: It will sit in Ottawa?

Mr. GARDINER: Last year the committee sat part of the time in Regina and part of the time in Ottawa. The third man on the committee last year was the soils man at the university of Saskatchewan. These three men from time to time checked on what was being done by the inspectors and others, and we thought it advisable this year to put on a board at the beginning of the season in order to speed up the work in connection with payments throughout the season.

Mr. PERLEY: They would be located in Regina?

[Mr. Gardiner.]

Mr. GARDINER: Not necessarily. It is a matter of satisfying the officials that the payments ought to be made. Sometimes sittings are required in Regina and sometimes here—more likely here than in Regina.

Mr. CRERAR: If I may interrupt the proceedings, Mr. Chairman, I find, on looking at *Hansard* that according to the announcement made last night of the business for to-day, the hon. member for Weyburn (Mr. Douglas) is in error. Last night I said:

To-morrow we should get along with second readings of various bills on the order paper.

The leader of the opposition asked what they were and I said:

There is the bill based on the resolution respecting the Prairie Farm Assistance Act.

That is the measure which we have under consideration now.

Mr. STIRLING: But the bill was not printed and it did not reach us. I think I am right in saying that the bill was not printed and had not been distributed, and I do not think it had reached my office by the time the sitting of the house began at eleven o'clock this morning.

Mr. CRERAR: That is not the point. The fact is that it stands on the order paper for second reading to-day and it was announced last night.

Mr. STIRLING: But surely we are not expected to discuss bills that have not reached us.

Mr. CRERAR: I do not know when it was distributed.

Mr. PERLEY: About one o'clock.

Mr. STIRLING: That meets the minister's objection.

Mr. BLACK (Cumberland): What disbursements were made under this act in the last calendar year?

Mr. GARDINER: I gave an undertaking a few minutes ago that I would not proceed with this bill to-night if anyone had any objection. If there is no objection, I might answer a few questions to-night.

Mr. PERLEY: It is understood that on section 2 to-morrow we shall have the opportunity of a general discussion.

Mr. GARDINER: That is on the first section.

The payments made last year under this bill were:

In the \$1.00 category.....	\$4,132,206 07
In the \$1.50 category.....	2,617,830 95
In the \$2.00 category.....	173,971 81
In the \$2.50 category.....	2,839,197 38