

which prophesied that when we had reached the end of the year and had the figures, the index figure for Saskatchewan would be past the 100 mark. I have now the 1943 figures, and they show that the index figure for Saskatchewan is 110.3, as I gave it to the house this morning.

I even went farther when I was speaking in Regina and pointed out that the price of wheat had been increased to \$1.25 a bushel on September 28 last, and as I was speaking about two months later that increased price could have had little effect on the index figure of returns to the Saskatchewan farmer. The increased payment of fifteen cents on barley and ten cents on oats had just been established. What I was really saying to the western farmers at that meeting, and I said it at twenty-five different meetings, was that they had not had their proportion of returns during the war down to 1942, and the statistics indicated that, but that the reason why they had not received returns down to that time was that we had not the information with regard to the sales of live stock products generally across Canada, and with regard to the sale of fruits and other products, and, therefore, that we were not in a position to make a proper comparison until we had those figures; and that as soon as the complete figures for 1942 were in our hands we made adjustment of the returns on grain, which, as I stated at that time, would bring the index figure past the 100 mark, and I prophesied that by the end of 1944 Saskatchewan would be on a comparable basis with the other provinces. I repeated that statement this morning; and I am quite sure, knowing as we do now that the income in Saskatchewan is up by over sixty per cent in the first six months of the year, whereas the increase across Canada is up by only twenty-five per cent, that there will be a considerable adjustment of the index figures relating to the grain growing provinces during the year 1944 and in all probability the figures for Saskatchewan will be as good as the figures for most of the other provinces. That is the point I was wishing to make at that time. That is what the hon. member for Lake Centre himself says should be the objective of this government, and since we hope to reach that objective during this year I trust that when the election rolls around he will support the government on that particular matter of policy.

A number of other questions were brought to our attention. One was the question raised by the hon. member for Lake Centre whether this legislation is *intra vires*. Along with that he quoted at some length the title of the bill, and I am not at all surprised that when he

read the title he thought it was a preamble because it takes two lines to recite the title to the bill, which reads: "An act for the support of the prices of agricultural products during the transition from war to peace." The reason why this bill has such a long title, and the reason why the title on the inside page of the bill appeared to the hon. member to be a possible preamble to the bill, is the fact that in order to make the bill *intra vires* it had to be made absolutely clear that this is not a bill to set prices. This house has not the authority to set prices on goods which are produced within the different provinces and which are consumed in those provinces, and we do not presume under this bill to do anything which we have not the authority to do, which would only result in having the bill thrown out of court before it could come into operation. So that it is made perfectly clear that the bill does not intend to set prices. It does not set prices. It merely places within the power of a board which is to be set up under the bill the authority to prescribe prices which will do certain things. Those are the prices at which we are prepared to purchase products, and the purchasing of the products will do certain things. In this way we are accomplishing what we have stated on previous occasions we would accomplish, namely putting floor prices under the goods which are being produced in the dominion and which have been affected by ceiling prices during the time the war was on.

I have been asked whether this would involve the setting of quotas. I do not know whether the hon. member for Lake Centre had in mind the placing of quotas upon production, but I assume he had that in mind from the references that he made. Or perhaps he had in mind the setting of quotas such as we have put on during the war, whereby after the products have been produced we put a quota on their delivery to the market. That was particularly true of wheat and some other grains. We put a quota on their deliveries during the year. But I think what the hon. member for Lake Centre had in mind was the old question whether we were going to say to the farmers, "This is all you can grow, and if you grow any more you will not get this particular return on it; or if you produce any more the government is not prepared to take it." If that is what he had in mind, that is not what the bill intends to do. We do not intend to say to the farmers, "If your production happens to run high next year, or the first year following the war, only a certain percentage of that production will be taken."

[Mr. Gardiner.]