

*Adjournment Debate*

constituents come into my office having suffered an injury at the plant and they are now partially disabled. I do not think I have had many people who have been fully disabled but I have had people partially disabled. They feel that these payments are compensation for their injury. Well, monetary compensation can never, as everyone knows well, put a body back together. But compensation on that basis is a recognition by society that they have suffered a wrong and society has compensated them. They then find themselves in a position where they are at the poverty line or very close to it and when they fill out the GIS form they have to include this income and there is a contradiction here.

I notice that not only do we have the bureaucrats in Finance looking into this, but we are fortunate enough in having the bureaucrats in Health and Welfare doing so as well. Therefore, I want my remarks with respect to the bureaucrats in the bowels of the Department of Finance also directed to the bureaucrats in the bowels of, and I guess that is most appropriate, National Health and Welfare. If they are studying this thing they should get along with it and do it seriously and bring it back because the next time this is debated they may not find every Member wants to get up and support any more bureaucratic delay.

May I call it six o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** You may. I regret that I cannot recognize the Hon. Member for Cape Breton-East Richmond (Mr. Dingwall).

[*Translation*]

The hour allotted for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

● (1800)

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 46 deemed to have been made.

### SOUTHERN SASKATCHEWAN FARMERS—REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE. (B) AID TO CATTLEMEN

**Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House I raised the question of federal Government assistance for hard-pressed farmers in western Canada. Harvesting in Saskatchewan is only about 35 per cent complete as of this week. By this time in most years harvesting would be totally complete. To make matters worse, yesterday in Saskatchewan there was additional rainfall and even some snow.

The problem of the late, wet harvest is only the latest of the misfortunes which prairie farmers have faced. Drought has ravaged much of the grain and pasture land in southern

Saskatchewan and across the Prairies. Grasshoppers have plagued the same area. These two curses have resulted in a total crop failure for thousands of farm families. The livestock sector has also been affected because when there is no grain and no pasture there is nothing for cattle to eat.

Our farmers are tough, resilient, and optimistic, but for many of these farmers this is the second, third, or even fourth year of severe crop and livestock losses due to drought and grasshoppers. These farmers are doing everything possible to help themselves out of the desperate economic hardship which they have been experiencing. The problems they are facing now are not of their own making, so it is only fair that they should receive adequate help to overcome them. Yesterday I asked the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) to make an immediate commitment to provide prairie farmers with adequate and timely relief. I asked for that commitment, Mr. Speaker, because the Hon. Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Gustafson) refused to make that commitment to the farmers during the summer and the Minister has only hinted at the commitment, refusing to make it. I ask for the commitment now because relief is needed by farm families now.

The situation is desperate. Many farm families must rely on donations to make ends meet. The Farm Women's Action Committee and the Southwest Drought Committee are collecting and distributing donations of food, clothing, livestock feed, and other supplies to those in greatest need. I have been informed that commercial market gardeners near Regina are donating garden produce to the cause. Donations of clothing are coming from as far away as British Columbia and Ontario. Surely this illustrates the urgency of the situation. Surely the Government can see that the time for action is now. Farmers, their families, and the farm organizations have been asking why the Government is so reticent to act now in this time of need. The Government did not hesitate to act with haste in committing \$1 billion to its scheme of bailing out the banks. Foreign depositors are receiving federal Government compensation, but Saskatchewan grain farmers are still waiting to learn if their Government will help them.

Drought, unlike floods or earthquakes, does not happen overnight. We have known about the drought and grasshopper conditions in western Canada since June and July. Why delay making the commitment to the grain producers? Yesterday the Minister of Agriculture said he needed time for consultations. Mr. Speaker, Government consultations are sometimes dangerous things. The Minister had consultations with his Conservative counterpart in Saskatchewan regarding drought assistance to livestock producers. That kind of consultation was not worth the time it took. That consultation resulted in every dollar of federal Government aid going, not to the farmers, but directly into the coffers of the Saskatchewan Government. The Saskatchewan Government took all of the credit for the program and then took the money from the federal Government for itself.

Farming is a difficult business, Mr. Speaker. Among their other concerns, farmers are constantly at the mercy of the weather. Drought, flood, and grasshoppers are disasters which