

Prairie Farm Assistance

government has been in office four years, and has behind it two-thirds of the western members. I suggest that if it has settled on its policy it should stick to it, and that it stop changing policies. When changes are made they bring about instability, chaos and too much uncertainty not only in western Canada but in the east as well.

I will not discuss present plans. They are too complicated for me to base an opinion upon. I hope that they may be successful. With whatever modifications hon. members may decide to bring about, I hope they may be given a fair trial. But I repeat we must aim at something by way of a long range plan.

May I point out that between 1930 and 1935, when we were in power and an emergency arose in the west, we met that emergency courageously, with plans that gave not only satisfaction but profit to the west and to Canada. Last night I referred to some of the things we had done, but I missed a couple and I should like to repeat them at this time. First of all we gave the five cent bonus on wheat, which cost about \$12,000,000 or \$13,000,000 in 1931 and 1932. We gave drought relief to the extent of tens of millions of dollars. I do not know the exact figure, but I think it will amount to almost \$90,000,000 or \$100,000,000. We brought about stabilization operations under John I. McFarland, with a profit, which probably meant one hundred million dollars to the west. The profit to the government on the deal was between nine and ten million dollars.

We established a wheat board which the minister is still maintaining. We fixed the price of wheat at 87½ cents per bushel. Then there is this point which I forgot to mention last night. We obtained a six cent preference on the British market through the empire agreements, something which this government has lost, and the loss of which I believe is a misfortune. I am convinced that the barter deal would not have been possible if the six cent preference on wheat had still been maintained.

Then, I mentioned last night the provision of seed grain, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, the Natural Products Marketing Act and the Farmers' Creditors Arrangement Act. I believe that covers pretty much what we did, when we had a chance, and when we were in power and realized the emergency in the west. The only thing I can say is that I believe we successfully coped with that emergency. When we are again in power and an emergency arises we will give the same just treatment to the west, in the belief that

[Mr. Manion.]

it is the desire of Canadians in every part of Canada to preserve this great nation. In addition our policy would be to work out a plan of a permanent nature, and I am urging upon the minister now that they should work out a similar plan, when in power, if possible in cooperation with other producing countries, a plan which would be just not only in world trade but to all sections of the dominion.

Mr. VICTOR QUELCH (Acadia): Mr. Speaker, I should like to congratulate the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) upon the excellent address he made yesterday. I always enjoy listening to the minister, because he always presents his views in a pleasing manner. I am sorry I cannot also congratulate him upon the various proposals he has brought down to the house to deal with certain conditions which exist to-day. The whole bunch of them fill one with a feeling of futility and confusion.

On April 5 we listened with a great deal of interest to the Minister of Agriculture with respect to his new wheat marketing policy. I have since that time read his observations several times. I have read the various bills that are being brought down, and after careful consideration I have come to the conclusion that the minister has made an error in regarding two entirely different problems as one. The two different problems, as I see them, are these: First of all, the introduction of a sound, permanent wheat marketing policy, under which we shall attempt to fit supply to demand, in order to stabilize prices at a level which will guarantee to the producer a price at least equal to the cost of production, and commensurate with the price that he has to pay for other commodities. The second problem, as I see it, is drought relief. Perhaps under that heading one might also include crop insurance.

Up to the present time not one single measure has been brought before the House of Commons which will deal adequately with either of these problems. As a result of the minister's proposal the majority of wheat growers in western Canada very shortly will find themselves in the same unfortunate condition in which the farmers in the drought area found themselves, namely in a state of bankruptcy—unless prices of their own volition rise.

Before going farther I should like to deal with a statement made by the minister on April 5, a statement which in my opinion was very unfortunate, because it has caused