

Apparently these regulations have been pretty well advertised in the few days since they were tabled, and I should like the minister frankly to tell us how many protests he has received from western Canada from provincial governments, farm organizations, and the like, and what has been the general reaction to these regulations. I suggest that even yet it is not too late for this thing to be dropped, and let us set a fair price. It would relieve the Minister of Trade and Commerce of a lot of trouble; I know he is going to have grief. Certainly it would relieve the Minister of Agriculture, and it would be well received in western Canada. Drop the whole thing, and come back to a fair and reasonable price. It would not cost any more. Set a ratio with respect to the amount you will take, and leave it at that. The farmers will adjust themselves and will be only too glad, now that they are starting to seed, to get down to their ordinary routine and follow out the system which they have adopted.

The Sinaluta farmer whom I have mentioned summer-fallowed last year 500 acres; he had 300 acres in wheat, and only 40 acres in oats and barley. In what position is that man going to be this year? He will have to reduce to 200 acres his acreage seeded to wheat, and it will leave him another 100 acres to summer-fallow, with the result that he has 660 acres to summer-fallow this year again. It seems to me that, in view of the injustices which will be done under the proposed system, the minister will be well advised to reconsider it, even thus late in the session.

Mr. ROSS (Moose Jaw): Regarding this point which is being discussed, about the farmer who happened to have a large amount of land in wheat in 1939 and a small amount in 1940, or a large amount of wheat in 1940 and a small amount in 1939, provided that he has one-third more, say, in one year than another, why would it not be possible to take the average of the two years? If the man, because of statements which were made last year, decreased his wheat acreage one-third, he should not be penalized for that; he was carrying out what we wanted carried out. Therefore he should be given the average between what he sowed to wheat in 1939 and what he sowed to wheat in 1940. On the other hand, the man whose acreage went up should be cut down a similar amount.

Mr. QUELCH: What about the man who had half the area in wheat in 1939 and the whole area in wheat in 1940?

Mr. ROSS (Moose Jaw): No man should be paid on the basis of 100 per cent of his land sown. I believe that good practice in western Canada for many years has been

one-third summer-fallow, and any reduction should start from 66 per cent and not above that point.

In the case where some man increased his acreage considerably in the last year, it should be averaged between what he had in 1939 and what he had in 1940; and vice versa.

Mr. PERLEY: Would the hon. member deal with the case I cited? Where a man had only 20 per cent in 1939 and summer-fallowed it all in 1940, what would happen?

Mr. ROSS (Moose Jaw): It would be utterly impossible to make regulations here to fit every farmer. My hon. friend is giving a case which would not represent one-tenth of one per cent of the farmers of the country. In these regulations we are trying to deal with the average case. We cannot make a regulation that will fit every one. I know of farmers who will find it impossible to summer-fallow this year owing to certain conditions, and therefore they cannot come under the scheme at all. But we cannot expect to make regulations that will cover all cases.

Mr. PERLEY: Will these regulations follow the land or the land owner? Land companies have been mentioned.

Mr. GARDINER: They will follow the land.

Mr. PERLEY: I am thinking of regulation No. 6.

Mr. GARDINER: That is, that no payment shall be made under the regulations in respect of any farm which was operated by a tenant in 1940 and is operated by hired labour in 1941. That is to deal with cases where tenants have been operating the land, and the owner of the land undertakes this year, because of the fact that this legislation is brought into effect, to cut his hired help down, put in no crop, and get summer-fallow on all, which in some cases might give a higher return than he might get from his proportion of the rent. It is not intended to make payments in these cases.

Mr. PERLEY: That case fits me to a knock-down. I am not accusing the minister of putting it in there, because perhaps I told his advisers beforehand, even before the regulations came down, what I had arranged to do this year, and I am going to carry out those arrangements irrespective of this. I suggest, however, that we should have an understanding on one question. Can members of this House of Commons who are farmers expect any part of this bonus under these regulations? I am thinking of the Independence of Parliament Act. This comes out of the dominion treasury and it is not a statute. Can