

the estimates are before the committee, but can the minister give us any idea of the administrative costs last year and the previous year?

Mr. GARDINER: That information is contained in a return. I can look it up; but if it would be satisfactory I will give it when the estimates are before the committee.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: In spite of the fact that many farmers have complied with the department's request to reduce their wheat acreage, and in spite of the fact that the government said they could take 280,000,000 bushels of wheat this year, so far they have taken only about 170,000,000. I would say there are about 400,000,000 bushels of wheat out on the farms. Could some provision be made through this measure by which an advance could be given to the farmers who have complied with the regulation? It would give them some compensation as an advance for wheat on their farms; it would not be considered as a gift. The money would be there, and that is just as good as the wheat in the bin. It would give tremendous relief to farmers in that part of the country who have not been allowed to deliver grain.

Mr. GARDINER: I am afraid that is somewhat outside the scope of this bill. I should not like to get into a discussion of that, because it really does not concern my department. It is the concern of the Department of Trade and Commerce.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in.

Mr. Gardiner thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 66, to amend the Wheat Acreage Reduction Act, 1942.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

Mr. GARDINER moved the second reading of the bill.

He said: There is a copy of this bill available for each member of the house. As I have stated already, farmers have been waiting since last September for these payments. If it meets with the approval of the house I should like to go right ahead with the bill because these payments cannot be made until it is passed. They should have been made last September.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I would not want to take the responsibility of holding up the bill if it is urgent, but it is regrettable that it has been brought up on a Friday afternoon when a number of members who

are interested in it are absent. Perhaps that is their fault. If the minister will give an undertaking that this is an urgent matter, I will not invoke the rule which would prevent him from going on.

Mr. GARDINER: It is most urgent. If I did not get an opportunity of going on with it next week, it would have to go over until the first of May which would prevent farmers getting their payments before entering into seeding.

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

On section 1—definitions.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Would the minister read section 2 of the act which this section amends.

Mr. GARDINER: This is the interpretation section which gives the definitions of the different terms used in the act.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): This is adding one further definition.

Mr. GARDINER: We say that no payments are to be made in respect of abandoned land, and we define "abandoned". The definitions in the act read:

In this act unless the context otherwise requires,

(a) "area" means the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta and the Peace river and Creston districts in the province of British Columbia;

(b) "basic acreage" means, with respect to coarse grains or grass, the acreage as of the first day of July in any year;

(c) "coarse grains" means barley, oats, corn and peas;

(d) "farm" means the total land being operated as a unit;

(e) "farmer" means an owner operator, or tenant operator of a farm;

(f) "grass" means all grasses, clover, alfalfa and millet;

(g) "landlord" means an owner of a farm operated by another person and includes a mortgagee or unpaid vendor who by contract or by law has a right to or a lien on or ownership in a part of the crop grown on a farm;

(h) "land newly broken" means land ploughed for the first time;

(i) "minister" means the Minister of Agriculture;

(j) "summer-fallow" means the cultivation or management of fallow land in such a way as to conserve soil moisture or to prevent soil drifting, or both.

Then we have the amendment provided by section 1 of the bill:

(aa) "abandoned" with reference to the cultivation of any land, means that such land is not in crop or in summer-fallow or, if sown to grass, has lost its productivity.