

Prairie Grain Stabilization Act

heading under this bill. Stabilization of what? Stabilization of poverty.

Mr. Boulanger: You have said that four times.

Mr. Paproski: Stick around and he will say it four more times.

Mr. McBride: This is nonsense.

Mr. Korchinski: This is a very stupid bill.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Korchinski: I will keep repeating that statement until it sinks in with the Liberal members. Do members opposite know what this bill does? You have an average for the past three years. I ask members to apply that to their own salaries. How do they get off with that? All I am saying is—

Mr. Boulanger: Speak to the bill.

Mr. Korchinski: I will speak to the bill. I suggest that members opposite apply this principle to their own conditions to see how they make out with it.

Mr. Boulanger: You poor western farmer.

Mr. Korchinski: The cost of production, fuel, taxes, owning a tractor and depreciation, all keep going up. Although the cost of producing the commodity goes up, the government is trying to stabilize the income and keep it on an even keel. The cost of production keeps going up while the level of income remains constant. This is what this bill guarantees. What kind of guarantee is this? This is not stability.

Mr. McBride: Nonsense.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When the minister spoke earlier today, he was being interrupted. I thought it was my duty to bring to the attention of hon. members that the minister should be given an opportunity to make his speech. Members on both sides thought that was a good suggestion. I think the suggestion applies equally to the hon. member for Mackenzie, and he should be given an opportunity to make his speech freely without interruption.

Mr. Korchinski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did not think I was having any difficulty. Interruptions are most welcome because they are really inspirations.

Mr. Boulanger: They are the best part of the speech.

Mr. Korchinski: The income is to be stabilized and maintained for a period of years. Who in this country would accept the principle that he should maintain a stabilized income? No industry, union or anyone else will accept that principle, yet this government, through this minister who projects the image that he does, intends to sell it in Assiniboia and other parts of Saskatchewan. The government has to tell these people that the costs of production have not increased. I suggest they check with Mr. Thatcher because he raised the price of fuel by 2 cents one year ago.

[Mr. Korchinski.]

The Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) intends to increase the minimum wage. How can the government rationalize the fact that the cost of production is increasing, yet the level of income is to be stabilized? That is not the point. What you have to do is consider the gross returns after considering the expenses. It is very easy to figure this out. If they had figured it out on that basis, because, you know, what do you call it—what is the term, now?

• (12:50 p.m.)

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Net social benefit.

Mr. Korchinski: Net social benefit, that's it. I am having trouble with new terms.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): That's all it is, just a new term.

Mr. Korchinski: It is a new term. They figure out the total cost of producing a bushel of grain, and so on. I know these are factors that can be figured out. In the end, you can see an incline in the graph, and if this were the type of scale the minister worked on it would be readily accepted by me and I think by members of my party.

I wish to go on to another aspect of the bill. It has been said that PFAA does not really matter too much in the over-all agricultural picture in western Canada. True, there are many people in my area who would say: Fair game; we paid into the thing but we are not so willing to fight to maintain it. Yet between 1939 and 1969, the amount the federal government contributed to the farmers was something like \$176 million in excess of what the farmers themselves had contributed. This may not represent an important part of the economy, yet \$176 million over a period of some 30 years amounts to about \$6 million a year on an average. In some years there was a greater contribution and in others it was less. The point is that the government was committed to a contribution of this type.

There are many areas in my province which are not covered by crop insurance. Crop insurance will eventually bring some benefit to those who pay for it. The point is that farmers have been contributors over the years and this in itself has meant the syphoning off of a lot of money from these people, money which is not readily available. In order to be in a position to benefit from a crop insurance program, one has to pay a certain amount of money into it. Money has to be taken out of circulation and paid into a fund.

I have some figures here which might interest hon. members. Three-quarters of the amounts are paid by the farmers and the other quarter by the federal government. In 1968, the average premium paid by farmers in the three prairie provinces was as follows: In Saskatchewan, \$200; in Alberta, \$295; and in Manitoba, \$214. In 1969, the average amount in Manitoba was \$177. In Saskatchewan, it was \$157 and in Alberta it was \$260. We can readily see what has happened. As soon as a bad year is experienced the farmers begin to withdraw from