

this money was not provided principally to create work rather than to build houses for people who need a place to live in. If the purpose was to create employment, then I think the Government is getting into a vulnerable position. It is supplying money or guaranteeing the loan of money to build houses, and is selling them to the people. This is a type of class legislation, because a prospective purchaser has to be earning so much money before he can buy such a house.

I do not want to preach blue ruin, but I would remind honourable senators of the Farmers' Creditors Arrangement Act which was brought in to assist farmers by reducing the principal and interest payments which they were committed to pay. The terms of purchase under which many of the first farms were bought by returned men after the First World War had to be changed. It is quite possible that some day something of that nature may have to be done to assist the people who are now buying houses with heavy carrying charges.

Honourable senators, I did not intend to speak in this debate, and I would not have taken part in it, but for the fact that I wished to refer to a measure which Parliament passed last session known as the Agricultural Stabilization Act. On this subject the Speech from the Throne has this to say:

Unremitting efforts are being made to sell Canadian agricultural and fisheries products in the markets of the world and considerably larger exports of wheat and cattle have been made. Support prices have now been established for a considerable number of products under the Agricultural Stabilization Act to carry into effect, for the current year, the desire of Parliament that agriculture should be thus assisted to realize fair returns for its labour and investment.

Honourable senators will recall that that legislation named nine commodities which were to have a floor price of 80 per cent of the average price for the previous 10 years. When the bill was before the Senate I asked why potatoes were not included in the list of commodities, because they are a very important item in the economy of Prince Edward Island. I was told that potatoes were provided for in another part of the bill.

During the recent election campaign Liberal speakers claimed that potatoes were not protected by this legislation, and on the television and over the radio I heard Government speakers say that they were protected. Indeed, I heard one minister say that the floor was not limited to 80 per cent of the average price but could go as high as \$1.30. As honourable senators know, the price of potatoes often fluctuates a good deal in a short time. In March there were snow storms, the roads

were bad and at one time the cold weather pushed the price of potatoes up to \$2.50 for 75 pounds; it levelled off to \$2, and then went down and down until they are now selling at 50 cents or less for 75 pounds. A delegation of two representatives of the potato growers in my province came to Ottawa to see what could be done about it, but nothing happened. Then a week or ten days ago the provincial Minister of Agriculture came up here, bringing with him the President and other members of the Marketing Board. On their return they said they had met with members of the Government who were interested in their problem, but nothing was done about it. The editor of the Charlottetown *Guardian* which is and has been for many years a strong Conservative paper, wrote a scorching editorial—I have it in my room, but did not bring it down to the chamber—asking why the potato growers were not being taken care of under the Agricultural Stabilization Act.

Potatoes certainly mean a good deal to the economy of our people. Last winter, especially in March and April, there was a lot of snow. The roads were plowed with snow-plows; there was no frost in the ground; and people whose potatoes were stored a few miles from the railroad, say six or eight miles away, found it impossible to get them out, while those who had them in warehouses nearby were able to sell them. Now these people with unsold potatoes are in an unfortunate position, and the Government, so far as I know, has done nothing about it. This week both the ex-leader and the present leader of the Conservative party in the province came to Ottawa about this business, having taken the trouble to drive all the way. I have known them for many years, and they are fine men. They are now on their way back, and so far as I know, no action has been taken.

Now, potato farmers are not "pikers". If the Government does not intend to live up to its contract or do what it promised to do, I believe they will be quite satisfied to have potatoes and other vegetables removed from the Agricultural Stabilization Act and all the other measures which were taken to support vegetable prices. Then they would know that they would not get any support and they would be on their own. A good many of them, in fact, would rather be in that position. But that is the state of affairs today. I do not know what will be done about it, but something should be done. Perhaps the honourable Leader of the Government in the Senate (Hon. Mr. Aseltine) will take the matter up with the Minister of Agriculture and get some action. When the Agricultural Stabilization Bill was being put through the house the sponsor told us that the price of certain named commodities would be set early in