

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: No. All the elevator operators are commissioners for taking oaths and they can swear the affidavit.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: And do they prepare the affidavits?

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: The affidavits are printed.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: Thank you for that information.

Further, I should like to know how the additional expense in connection with the administering of this legislation will be handled. It is obvious that the board will have to take on a great many more employees, and additional expense will be incurred in connection with this legislature. Is that to be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, or will it be a charge against the farmers when they get their final payment?

Hon. Mr. Haig: It is going to be paid by the Government, of course.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: I fail to see anything in this bill to that effect. All I see in that connection is that the Government will pay all interest charges, and any losses less 10 per cent. According to the bill, all other expenses are to be charged up against the money the board gets when it sells the wheat, and the farmer is going to have to bear his share.

Honourable senators, I feel that the farmers will be rather disappointed with this legislation. It was introduced because the Prairie Grain Producers Interim Financing Act was not satisfactory, in that the farmers were not able to borrow enough money. It will be recalled that in 1956 that act was amended to increase the limit of borrowing by farmers from \$1,500 to \$3,000. Under that legislation the farmers now can borrow up to \$3,000. But under the bill now before us a farmer must have 1,000 specified acres to qualify for an advance of \$3,000. If he has fewer than 1,000 specified acres he cannot possibly get \$3,000. Now, how many farmers in western Canada can qualify for 1,000 specified acres?

I think the honourable senator from Rose-town for the figures he put on page 98 of *Hansard* last evening. He pointed out that there was a total of 231,000 permit holders. He gave the breakdown of the number of permit holders for the 100-200 specified acre category, the 200-300, the 300-400 and so on up to the 500-600 specified acre category. I have added up these figures and I find that there are 146,333 farmers in the 300 specified acre category or lower. That is to say, out of 231,000 permit holders, 146,000—or about 65 per cent—have 300 specified acres or less. Now, a farmer with 300 specified acres will

get the 6-bushel quota, or a total of 1,800 bushels, and at 50 cents a bushel he can get an advance of \$900. And mark my words, that is merely an advance, not a gift, for this money has to be paid back. That farmer could go to the bank and borrow \$900 at 5 per cent for a year, at a cost of \$45. But he does not have the \$900 for the year. The longest time he can have it is nine months. An honourable senator suggests it is ten months, but I would say nine. It has to be paid back before the next crop year. He does not have the \$900 throughout the whole term of nine months because as he takes his wheat to the elevator he has to pay back part of the money. So we will say he has the \$900 for six months on an average, and at 5 per cent that would cost him \$22.50. So, all that about 65 per cent of the farmers of western Canada can get out of this legislation in dollar value in one year is \$22.50.

Now, honourable senators, I don't blame a lot of them at all for being disappointed. I think that during the last election campaign they were given to understand—I was not in western Canada at the time and I stand to be corrected if I am wrong—that there would be a change.

Hon. Mr. Haig: So there is.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: They thought they would not have to avail themselves of the provisions of the Prairie Grain Producers Interim Financing Act but would be able to get money some other way. Formerly they told us they needed \$3,000, and we amended that act so that they could get that amount. They were not satisfied with that; they said they could not get along with it, but would take the \$3,000. And what do we find they can get now? We find they can obtain \$600, for a period of less than nine months.

How can they get along? Well, there is one thing I like about this bill, namely, that it does not repeal the Prairie Grain Producers Interim Financing Act. That act remains in force, and that is a very good thing. This is one reason why I am in favour of the bill. If the Interim Financing Act were repealed the present bill would be practically useless, but in combination with the Prairie Grain Producers Interim Financing Act the bill will be of some help to the farmer. However, I am sure it does not measure up at all to the expectations of those who feel they do need more money and need it soon.

Well, honourable senators, I repeat that this bill does not solve the problem of how to dispose of surplus wheat. As I said at the outset, the problem can only be solved by the sale of the wheat. I do not condemn