

supervisors, and ninety-five employees in the office at Regina. I understand that the minister proposes to use as far as possible this prairie farm assistance set-up. Does he expect to have to increase the number of field men and inspectors? I would hope that if this organization is used, the minister would revise the system of paying the inspectors, because the present system of remunerating travelling allowances and so forth is an outrage, when one considers the time these 365 men were employed and the amount they drew in remuneration and expenses. I hope that nothing like that will be allowed under this policy. Would the minister state to what extent he expects to increase this staff and the extent to which he expects to use the municipalities?

Mr. GARDINER: I neglected to answer that question when the hon. member for Macdonald asked it a moment ago. We did have here representatives of the three departments of agriculture in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and since then we have had a further representative of the government of Alberta in the person of the minister of mines and resources, who happened to be here and discussed the matter with us. We have an undertaking from all three provincial governments that they will cooperate in every possible way in carrying out the administration of this policy. We also had here representatives of the three provincial municipal organizations. I had a letter to-day from the secretary of the Manitoba association stating that he had already communicated with all the municipal secretaries in Manitoba, and he gave me a complete list of those who had replied. All of them had replied favourably indicating that they were quite prepared to undertake the task. Only a few—he did not give the number—had not yet replied, but he did not expect there would be any objection on their part; he thought they would all take charge of the activities within their municipalities. The same is true of Saskatchewan, and, I understand, of Alberta.

The extent to which we intend to use them is the extent to which they themselves suggested they ought to be used. When they were here they made recommendations to us. They sat here for three or four days and drafted recommendations as to the use they thought we ought to make of them. Their suggestions were acceptable to us. Their proposal was that they should do everything that we suggested they might do, particularly the taking of all applications from persons who were in the municipality, and that if we required any preliminary investigations to be made in order that they might be in a position to certify to certain statements, they

[Mr. Perley.]

were quite prepared to do that. As regards taking responsibility for the statements of individuals being absolutely correct, particularly the sworn statements we intend to take when they make application for payment, they preferred that we do that through our own inspectors under the Prairie Farm Assistance Act, or with any other set-up that we might decide upon for the time being. I do not think there will be any change, but we will use the inspection staff of the prairie farm assistance administration, and we will establish a number of offices in each of the provinces with a person in charge of the office. We shall use the same inspectors, some of them at least, if not all, who were used in administering the Prairie Farm Assistance Act. I would not expect that the number required would be any greater than the number required for the prairie farm assistance work. The work is not carried on altogether in the same period of the year. It might require a longer period of time for the same inspectors. Many inspectors did not begin their work until the harvest time. Some began in June and some in July.

Mr. PERLEY: If the municipalities are used as the minister suggests, would it not be possible to cut down the number of field men? I see by this return that in connection with the Prairie Farm Assistance Act there were 188 field men and 177 inspectors. Does the minister propose to continue these inspectors, or will the municipalities supply field men?

Mr. GARDINER: The municipalities have not undertaken or suggested that they should undertake what is called the field work in connection with the Prairie Farm Assistance Act. Some of the work in connection with that act, making an estimate of the crop yield, for instance, will not be required at all under this policy. The men who are estimating the crop under the Prairie Farm Assistance Act are field men, and while they are doing that work they can make the other check. Two trips should not be necessary to see if the farmer made a proper return, because much of the information required under this policy could be got through the municipalities.

Mr. PERLEY: I am suggesting to the minister a means of saving money. Under the system of checking which the field men followed last year, they simply drove by each quarter-section and made an estimate for their own purposes, and they never visited and discussed the estimate with the farmer at all. Much of the work done by the field men in the first six months of the year was useless because it all had to be done again later on by the inspectors.