

has to be provided for in the bill in the manner in which it is described at the present time.

I sympathize with the hon. member. I know what he is driving at. I can only reiterate that our firm commitment is there. On the basis of the negotiations that will take place, we will ensure that the 25 per cent is a fundamental part of the agreements that are negotiated with the provinces.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, when the minister was responding to my comments he did not deal with the question of provinces like Prince Edward Island which are facing a massive increase in their premiums. Their administrative costs in the past have been about \$150,000. Their premiums and the premiums provided under this proposed legislation will be something like \$650,000 plus the administrative costs or cost sharing. Prince Edward Island is facing a \$500,000 increase in cost. Since that province did not agree I just wonder if any special arrangement or system is to be provided by the federal government for those smaller provinces.

I ask this question in view of the fact that under the existing legislation Prince Edward Island is not even guaranteed that it will get 25 per cent. The federal government may provide it. It should provide it and we hope that it will, but it is not guaranteed. I assume that there are similar figures for New Brunswick and British Columbia since they are both opposing this legislation. I wonder what arrangement there will be for such a massive increase in premium costs for smaller provinces.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Before recognizing the hon. minister, I should like to bring to the attention of hon. members that particularly right now when debate is permitted no member shall speak more than once or longer than 10 minutes during proceedings of any amendment at this particular stage.

Motions Nos. 5, 9 and 10 will be moved and we will have 10-minute speeches. Perhaps we can deal with this motion and begin consideration of the next one.

I will allow the minister to answer the question this time, but I think we should follow the Standing Orders.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, I was going to rise on a point of order to seek unanimous consent to respond to

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the very legitimate question of the hon. member. With your permission I will try to respond as briefly as I possibly can.

In his earlier remarks the hon. member left the impression that the whole country, all provinces, wanted a sharing arrangement of a third, a third and a third. He is absolutely wrong, and he should not leave that impression because he was not at Prince Albert. This happens to be a provincial program. I want to remind him, once again, that the provinces that utilize crop insurance to the fullest wanted no part of the one-third/one-third/one-third arrangement. He should know that. Ontario was there and it reluctantly accepted it.

• (1600)

They would have preferred the one-third/one-third/one-third sharing arrangement, but it was something like dealing with the Constitution. One will not get unanimous agreement on everything one does, in spite of one's best efforts. We did try to work out a solution to the problem and try to bring forth a piece of legislation that would reflect in a genuine way the best interests of all the producers and the participating provinces. I want to make sure that that impression is clarified.

The hon. member says that British Columbia is against this piece of legislation. That province has had some reservations but it is on board. New Brunswick has had some reservations, but we were working out an accommodation for them. It was not objecting to the principle as much as it was objecting to the fact that it needed some time to phase in the new sharing arrangement. We said that we were prepared to work with them in helping them ease into the new sharing arrangement. Those discussions are ongoing. We are prepared to do the same thing with Prince Edward Island.

This is not the perfect piece of legislation, but there are many players who are involved. We believe that it is a good starting point from which we can build a better crop insurance program on the basis of improvements that may be brought forth from time to time. When the hon. member suggests that this is more off-loading on the part of the federal government on to the provinces, I want to remind him that the share of the federal government's participation is not going down. It is going up. It is up to around \$300 million odd this year, and it