

*Prairie Farm Assistance Act*

Canada, and certainly in the area covered by P.F.A.A., has gone up tremendously since the last increases were made in these payments, I think this is a good resolution, especially in the light of the principle that those who are able to receive aid should double their contribution. There is one other point. Though the hon. member for Bow River has suggested there are many farmers who have paid consistently into this fund without receiving benefit from it, I wish to state that there are many farmers in western Canada who have received awards under the act but who have never sold a bushel of any kind of grain to pay anything into the fund. This act is not perfect, naturally. I think the government might also consider some changes in the regulations which would require all those who are in a position to receive awards to make some contribution.

**Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming):** I should like to comment on one or two aspects of this resolution. I was shocked to hear the hon. member for Assiniboia say that the present Minister of Agriculture and the party to which he belongs are engaged in that game which, I was told previously by the same hon. member, Jimmy Gardiner engaged in, and that this agency is being used as a political machine in western Canada. I hope there will be no continuation of this and, indeed, that there may not be much truth in it.

I was wondering if the hon. member for Assiniboia has given consideration to the number of occasions on which certain farming areas are given assistance under P.F.A.A. It seems to me that in paying out such large sums of money to this segment of agriculture—about \$19 million a year, which would be increased to \$38 million on an average by the proposals—

**An hon. Member:** Six million dollars.

**Mr. Argue:** About \$7 million from the government.

**Mr. Peters:** It has cost Canada since this scheme came into effect in 1957, \$128 million, which means that \$32 million was contributed by the farmers on the basis of the 1 per cent levy while the federal government paid in about \$95 million. That gives an average of about \$19 million or, under the resolution we are now discussing, \$38 million a year.

Certain areas have received these payments many times. I note that 701 awards were paid

20 times to the same area, and I suggest this is an indication we should consider exactly what is being accomplished by the act at the present time. While it seems to me necessary to support the argument that farmers should receive assistance in the years of crop failure, it is not my purpose to maintain on submarginal land farmers who without this provision would not receive payment at all.

It is interesting to look over this list and see the number of times repeat payments are made—in some cases every year since this act came into existence. It seems to me attention should be directed to this particular part of the resolution; the hon. member may be able to assure us that this is not intended as a substitute for ARDA or some of the other proposals for establishing economic farm units and a viable economy in the agricultural field by limiting submarginal operations which are of little value to the farmers and people of Canada.

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Chevrier:** May I inquire of the leader of the house what we shall be doing tomorrow, and ask whether we may have an indication of what we shall be doing from now until the end of the week.

**Mr. Churchill:** Tomorrow, we will take second reading of the bill based on the resolution which was passed earlier today dealing with the national economic development board. Should that be completed we would proceed to consider Bill No. C-64 amending the Coal Production Assistance Act, Bill No. C-83 concerning industrial change and manpower adjustment, and Bill No. C-70, an act to provide for the safety of persons employed in federal works, undertakings and business. That will be the work for Thursday.

As for Friday, I am not certain what the business will be. It will depend on the progress we make tomorrow. However, I think it likely that we shall go on with the estimates on Friday, which is rather a normal practice, and take those of the Department of Agriculture, which might be completed that day. Tomorrow I hope to be able to give to the house an outline of the business for the balance of the period prior to the Christmas adjournment.

It being three minutes after six o'clock the house adjourned, without question put, pursuant to standing order.