

If I were a young farmer today who was starting out, I would see no security in the bill or any income stability either, and I would not be keen to join this plan. However, 15 years from now when I had built up my farm I might well think the measure would give me a little stability and that I should join it. But then I would have to have the approval of the Minister of Justice, and the Minister of Justice might well look up my track record and say, "That fellow's name is associated with an old political family of a different stripe from mine, and I am not going to let him come into the plan". As I read clause 16, I cannot qualify for the plan unless I do so before 1978; otherwise it would be a matter for the minister's prerogative. While he has been Minister of Justice, the minister's prerogative in many cases has not gone beyond his own personal feelings. I am sure, Madam Speaker, you recognize that, being a woman and knowing something about women's groups bringing problems before the Minister of Justice at the present time. They feel that his own personal opinion is interfering with his reason and logic. I, as a wheat farmer, might well suspect that his own personal political views might keep young farmers who do not join this plan before 1978 from joining it afterwards.

Mr. Gillies: Shades of Jimmy Gardiner.

Mr. Horner: I think the hon. member is right—shades of Jimmy Gardiner. I think Jimmy Gardiner was a great westerner who did his best for western agriculture. But in doing so he attempted to gerrymander nearly every seat in Saskatchewan for his own political benefit. The point I am making, Madam Speaker, is this: in view of this provision about joining the plan before 1978, and in view of the complications of this bill, I think parliament would be very remiss if it were to pass the bill speedily. If the bill goes to committee, we would be very remiss if we did not spend a lot of time examining the bill thoroughly.

● (1450)

I have noted that some members advocate that the committee should travel. I am not one to suggest that members of parliament should go on junkets across the country, but I do know that some of these trips can be very beneficial. There is nothing like moving into a city where there is knowledge of the subject matter you are going to discuss and confronting the people there with the problems at the time of the committee's visit. That happened in respect of Bill C-176: I was delighted by the educational program the members of that committee undertook in respect of Bill C-176, and I was delighted by the desire of the people to participate in the discussions.

This bill is far more complicated. I know it pertains only to the Wheat Board region, but a committee travelling in that region would meet very knowledgeable and concerned audiences who I am sure would want to present briefs to the committee so that members might better understand this bill and the problems on the prairies.

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, when the minister responsible for the Wheat Board introduced this legislation at the second reading stage on April 28, he engaged in an historic review of recent events in dealing with agricultural problems. He took us back as far as 1968 and told us about the wonderful things that had

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taken place since then. Let me read one of the things he said, as recorded in *Hansard* of that day:

The consumers in this country are of course extremely interested in the production of grain.

I should like to begin my remarks by adding to that statement of the minister that the producers of Canada are also very interested in the production of grain. One of the omissions in the minister's historic review was the Lower Inventory for Tomorrow program which was introduced during the period to which the minister referred. The farmers on the prairies, who above all else want to produce grain to feed the hungry millions of the world, immediately dubbed that the "lower income for tomorrow" program, because it was absolutely inconceivable to them that a minister who had been given responsibility for the welfare of the grain producers in western Canada should have deliberately brought in a program designed to curb the capacity of western grain producers to do that which they know how to do best.

I do not know why the minister did not include a reference to that in his historic review, because I think that is one of the major facts of agricultural life in western Canada, or was during that period. I think it is also one of the reasons there has been growing instability in the prairie farm economy.

Shortly after the introduction of the LIFT program, the export market improved dramatically and, of course, the minister and the government took full credit for the booming market, completely oblivious of the fact that they had failed completely to anticipate it and had deliberately attempted to get wheat growers out of the wheat growing business.

The fact of life in terms of world food is that there is always a market for food and for grain which can never be met by our present productive capacity and techniques. This is the theme the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton) has hammered on from time immemorial. When you have over half the world's population starving, there is obviously a need for Canadian production of all the grain it is possible to produce. It was this constant demand for grain, combined with growing famine, that brought about the booming exports to which the minister referred during his historic review.

There was also another interesting omission from the minister's remarks. He neglected to indicate that, currently, exports of grain are at a five-year low. This does not mean the market is not there. Canada, particularly the western part, has an obligation to meet the demands of the growing world market for foodstuffs.

The Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang) who is responsible for the Wheat Board, and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan), have been out on the hustings during recent days. This is always an indication of something going badly awry with the dialogue between farm producers of western Canada and the Government of Canada. Even though the minister responsible for the Wheat Board suggested in his presentation of this legislation that it had been warmly received by the producers in the west, the fact that both he and his colleague have been out on the hustings is an indication that they are getting a different message from the grassroots producer.