

*Prairie Farm Assistance*

engaged in agriculture all their lives and have been members of this house for many years. They are of the utmost value in dealing with agricultural questions, but from the point of view of discussing these matters I should be very happy if we had a greater number. We will have more shortly, but at the moment we are a little low in numbers, although not in quality. In any event, sir, if the government has not been able to work out a good policy certainly it has not been because of any lack of members.

I do not intend to take up very much time, but I want to say that I do not like the expression "emergency year". Those words have been used in some of the speeches, and I believe appear in some of the legislation. The suggestion is that the government or the minister can declare any year to be an emergency year. I object to that because I think it might be abused; in other words, it might be used for political purposes. Either we have an emergency or we have not. It is not a question of declaration; it is a question of fact. And if we have an emergency no one either in the east or in the west will criticize whatever assistance may be given the prairie provinces in their time of need. But we might declare every year to be an emergency year, and if this policy is to become permanent we shall find that the farmers of other sections of Canada, the fishermen and other producers all over the country, will ask where they get off in connection with legislation of this kind. In other words, we shall have producers of all kinds saying, "Well, it is an emergency year for me also, and I want to know just what I get out of this government."

Mr. YOUNG: Just like the manufacturers.

Mr. MANION: My hon. friend keeps harping on the manufacturers. I do not know that they ever get any assistance, except in so far as the tariff holds their markets for them. I hold no particular brief for the manufacturers, but I want to do them justice. I have not heard them howling very much. Many of them have had to close down their plants, and more are closing down right now under the legislation of this government, but I have not heard them howling. Certainly, if this government, or our government when we succeed it, attempted to bring any legislation into this house to assist any manufacturer who might be going out of business, it would be talked right out of the house. The manufacturer does not get any direct assistance, so far as I know. I do not want to get off on a tariff discussion, but the tariffs hold

[Mr. Manion.]

the markets for manufacturers. At least that is what they should do, and the manufacturers should not be permitted to exploit the people because of the tariffs. I believe in a proper tariff system, and it seems to me that anyone who under present conditions does not hold that view is simply not properly using his mental capacity. To-day every country in the world has tariffs against us, so how could we possibly lower our tariffs and allow other countries to dump their goods here and put out of business not only our industrialists but also our farmers, so far as the east is concerned? It seems to me it could not be done.

As I was saying Mr. Speaker, when there is a real emergency in the west I think we should act as one family, one nation, not for political but for national reasons. We should recognize that emergency and should do everything possible to assist those affected, because in my opinion any great emergency in the west should be above anything in the way of politics. There are certain matters which should not be treated politically, and I think, any real emergency in the west, such as we have seen during the last few years, particularly in the drought areas, is a situation that must be treated in a different way from the ordinary treatment given the west.

Another point is that the policy, whatever it is, must be stable and not subject to change over-night or by order in council. I read the speech delivered last year by the hon. member for Melville (Mr. Motherwell), in which he rather bitterly attacked his own party for having changed certain legislation by order in council. I think it is just as important for the farmers of the west to have a stable policy as it is for the manufacturers of the east to have a stable policy. And then any such policy must be just to both east and west. For example, I believe the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Euler) has corrected his bill so that it applies to Ontario wheat as well as western wheat. The original bill, I understand, did not apply to Ontario. I think it only just that this change should be made. I was going to protest, as I know other hon. members were, if the Ontario wheat farmer was not put on the same basis as the western wheat farmer. I know of no reason why, in dealing with wheat in general, the Ontario wheat farmers, who raise from fifteen to twenty million bushels of wheat a year, should not also be given a fair deal.

An hon. MEMBER: And the Quebec farmers.