

take a job anywhere. It may be a thousand miles away. It doesn't matter how far away it is so long as he comes back before the first of May of next year. He would still be eligible to receive the benefits of this legislation.

Mr. BURTON: As I understand it, it simply means that the owner or tenant must remain in possession up to the first of November, and if he does that he gets his payments made immediately. If he takes some employment elsewhere owing to the failure of his crop—for instance he may be dried out and he may go and take a job during August or September—in such cases payment is held up until the board are satisfied that he is really back on the land the next year.

Right Hon. Mr. GARDINER: That is the way it works, with this exception that if this man did what most farmers do in those circumstances—if he went out threshing, let us say—he would not be considered as having left his farm because when the threshing season was over he would return to his farm, and in cases of that kind he would be eligible for his payment the first of December.

Mr. TOWNLEY-SMITH: How about a man who has been living on the land continuously but who had to sell his farm before that November 1 date? I have in mind particularly the case of a man who is now 82 years of age. He had a complete crop failure. He sold his farm in September and he is hoping to have the benefits of the bonus payment to help to live over the winter. His application was refused because he was no longer the owner of the land. He is a very old man and he has lived there for a long, long time, but because he happened to sell his farm six weeks too soon under the regulations apparently he is refused the benefits. It does seem to me that the regulations are far too rigid and that they should be administered with a certain amount of compassion. Why, even the army, who are sticklers for detail, have a compassionate section under which they get away from the rigidity of regulations once in a while. I think that is the way our regulations here should be administered. Is there nothing at all which can be done for this man?

Right Hon. Mr. GARDINER: As the regulations stand the report would not be favourable. It is a little difficult to understand why anyone would make an arrangement of that kind or would sell land, or could sell it out in the west, without knowing this situation, because it has been discussed over and over again at every meeting of farmers; and I think any lawyer drawing up an agreement would check into that to begin with. Sometimes people feel that it is better to sell anyway; here is a deal offered, it might not be offered six weeks from now and they sell. I presume they figure when they do that they are getting a better deal than they would get if they waited until later and took this payment. There is no way in which the board can determine what the man thought when he was doing it.

Mr. QUELCH: I still think that rigid 20-mile limit creates unnecessary hardship. Many cases have come to my attention where a farmer and his family have moved in town purely for the purpose of getting their children to school. I think of the case at the moment of a man who moved 24 miles from his farm to get his family attending a school, and just because of that he was deprived of the benefits under this Act because he happened to live for the time being at 20 miles outside the prescribed limit. I think greater discretion should be allowed with respect to this 20-mile limit.

Mr. GOLDING: In administering the Act have you come across many cases of that kind?

Right Hon. Mr. GARDINER: There are quite a number. I get quite a number of communications about them myself. I could not begin to tell you how many. As a matter of fact, when we looked at it in the beginning we thought that if a man lived ten miles away from his farm he should not be paid. I recall that was the attitude at the beginning, but then we doubled it to 20 miles. There may be some question as to whether we should double that and make it 40 miles.