

Supply—Agriculture

get as many people as possible to take advantage of this flexible plan without any undue abuse.

In so far as crop insurance is concerned, I believe it has played a very effective part in our agriculture economy, especially in Manitoba. I have been disappointed, however, at the indifferent attitude displayed by our C.C.F. government in Saskatchewan with regard to this crop insurance plan. I do not know what we can do to rectify the situation unless we change the government. I believe the royal commission headed by Professor Baker indicated very strongly that a crop insurance plan should be instituted for the whole of Canada. Particular reference was made by this commission to the need for such a plan in Saskatchewan. I have been disappointed, therefore, to find that the province which is most in need of a crop insurance plan has been the most reluctant to enter the plan. I do not know the reason for this reluctance unless there is some political expediency involved. I wonder why Saskatchewan could not set up a plan similar to the one which has been working so effectively in Manitoba?

I should like to see the provincial governments take a more practical view of these crop insurance plans. As we know, the federal government contributes half of the administration costs of the plan as well as 20 per cent of the premium. Perhaps the provincial governments, and especially Saskatchewan, could see their way clear to contributing another 20 per cent of the premium, and in this way the legislation would become very effective. A province like Saskatchewan is particularly susceptible to the vicissitudes of nature. This province is about an equal distance from the two oceans, the Pacific and the Atlantic, and as a result is sometimes the most arid region of Canada. Therefore, the need for this type of protection in this area is great.

I find that most of the agriculturists in my riding have been very pleased with this agricultural rehabilitation and development act, an outline of which was presented recently by the minister. On August 30, 1958, as recorded at page 4347 of *Hansard*, the Prime Minister summed up our national agricultural policy, and the fifth point was as follows:

Fifth, as a means of meeting the small farm problem the government has under consideration ways and means of improving the level of living for farmers on small farms by means of better land use, encouraging the formation of economic family farm units, improving technical training, extending unemployment insurance benefits to certain classes of farm workers, and by extending the vocational and technical training agreement for the benefit of those who wish to enter new occupations.

This is a long term program and we will have to wait a number of years before we

[Mr. Southam.]

feel the full impact of it. In looking at the *Ulster Commentary*, dated January, 1961, I find that the minister of agriculture for Northern Ireland, Mr. H. W. West, indicates that Northern Ireland has adopted the same type of developmental policy. I should like to quote this short paragraph from the minister's statement:

The other source of satisfaction is the development of afforestation which is making tremendous strides, particularly in areas where there is little hope of attaining a good return from the land by other methods. At present some 5,000 acres are being planted annually and it is hoped that within 25 years some 5 per cent of the land area will be covered by forest as against less than 1 per cent in 1945.

I quote this paragraph to illustrate that Canadian federal governments—and this government in particular—are not the only governments interested in this type of policy.

As the hon. member for Peace River has said, the P.F.R.A. and P.F.A.A. have been amended since this government came to power. These amended pieces of legislation have proven very effective, and there has been a lot of favourable comment from the farmers of my area who are interested in water conservation. The amendment of P.F.R.A. to increase grants for dugouts from \$125 to \$250 and for small dams from \$300 to \$600 has proven very beneficial, and a great number of farmers in Saskatchewan have reacted most favourably.

In addition, we have heard a great deal of favourable comment on the aggressive sales program of our government in respect of farm products. I am thinking now particularly of wheat. The recent sales to China, to Russia and Czechoslovakia are going to increase our total sales to well over 300 million bushels, the amount the minister suggested as the approximate total sales this year. There are suggestions that we may surpass this target, and this brings a great deal of satisfaction to the people of Saskatchewan who have these large carryovers of wheat and who are looking forward to the results of this aggressive sales program launched by the Minister of Trade and Commerce, the Minister of Agriculture and the wheat board which has been working in conjunction with them.

In speaking of a sales policy and its relationship to free trade, I may say that I was interested to notice an article in the *Star-Phoenix* of March 18 which referred to a statement by Premier Douglas in the Saskatchewan legislature. He was expressing his views on the thinking of the people in the west with regard to free trade. It was very