

Economic Conditions in Rural Communities

Australia. This is what we have to face, and it is no longer reasonable to expect that the Canadian wheat farmer should be left high and dry without any kind of government intervention. A Canadian can buy a one-pound loaf of bread which it takes him four minutes to earn. It takes an American six minutes to earn the cash for the same sized loaf, a Frenchman 11 minutes, a Russian 12 minutes and a Japanese 27 minutes. This is an example of the take-home pay of Canadians generally—those who are employed. Is it not reasonable to expect that the Canadian farmer should have a corresponding return at least for wheat consumed in Canada?

The hon. member for Assiniboia paid special attention to the grain production and receipts policy. I should like to place before the House a table which I have prepared on the basis of an answer to a question on the Order Paper; I believe it was question No. 606. I shall read the table. I took the receipts from 1956 to 1969. I chose the year 1956 because that is the year in which the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act was passed. From then on, payments were made under the act. The figures are as follows:

WHEAT RECEIPTS 1951-1969
Million Dollars

Year	Receipts	Previous 5-Year Average	Comparison of Previous 5 Year Ave. to Receipts	
			Deficit	Surplus
1956.....	452	448		4
1957.....	367	458	91	
1958.....	420	417		3
1959.....	423	374		49
1960.....	427	397		30
1961.....	467	418		49
1962.....	510	420		90
1963.....	578	450		128
1964.....	715	481		234
1965.....	642	539		103
1966.....	784	562		222
1967.....	742	646		96
1968.....	582	692	110	
1969.....	459	693	234	
TOTAL.....	7,568		(a) 435	1,008
Total deductions as proposed (3% of receipts—				
(b).....				
Grant required (a-b).....				
Payments under temporary wheat reserves				
Act (1956-69).....				
Payments under stabilization plan.....				
Loss of income to farmers in same period...				

The point is that only in 1957 was there a lower realized income from wheat than the previous five-year average. The next year was 1968-69. In all other years there was a higher income derived than the previous five year average. Under this stabilization program the government will not contribute anything. As a matter of fact, in 14 years they would have contributed for only

[Mr. Korchinski.]

three years. In 1957, the deficit was \$91 million, in 1968 it was \$110 million and in 1969 it was \$224 million.

• (9:10 p.m.)

During those years 1956-1969 the total contribution to the farmers would have been \$435 million under the stabilization program. With the 3 per cent deduction, \$227 million would have been taken from the farmers. In other words, the only contribution that the federal government would have made would have been \$208 million. During the same period, payments under the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act were \$584 million. With payments under the stabilization plan of \$208 million, there would have been a loss of income to the farmers of \$376 million. This is the plan that the minister has told the Canadian farmers is going to be the answer to their woes. I should like to quote from an article written in the *Globe and Mail* of June 3, 1968, by Anthony Westell:

A self-sustaining program to maintain farm incomes during bad years, without cost to the taxpayer, and a new idea on how to aid small farmers without perpetuating uneconomic operations were features of a major statement on agricultural policy issued last night by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau.

The article goes on to say:

Liberal party aides said the plan would probably be on the insurance principles with farmers contributing in good years and drawing income in bad years. They said the only cost to the government and the taxpayer would be in loans that might be needed to get the program started.

Up until 1968 this fund would have had a surplus of \$12 million. In 1967, \$91 million would have been paid out, and \$110 million would have been paid out in 1968. However, total deductions up until that time would have been \$213 million. In other words, the federal government would have contributed nothing. How can any farmer accept such a proposal as this? There are many other disadvantages to it. For example, the initial payment is not a guarantee. Any money put into the fund in the future to replenish it would be from future sales. The proposals should be a supplementation, not a substitute. I think that if the federal government has not the nerve to ask the consumers of Canada to pay an extra \$1 a bushel, then it should contribute from its own fund an amount equivalent to 50 million bushels. If the government has not the nerve to ask the Canadian consumer to pay a couple of cents more for a loaf of bread, then it is obligated to make up the difference.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I regret I have to interrupt the hon. member whose time has expired.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I support the motion moved by the official opposition. One part of the motion particularly attracts my attention. It is the part that reads "and caused injury and decline to our rural communities which are already seriously damaged by the government's failure to provide adequate agricultural policies". In my opinion the policies followed by this government and its predecessors ever since the end of the Second World War have coldly, calculatedly and deliberately been designed to eliminate hundreds of thousands of farm families, with the result that hundreds of prairie or rural communities of 500 to 5,000 population