Mr. Mills: The government should just say clearly and specifically that if a disadvantaged province which may not be able to put its full complement of funds on the table has to cut back 20 per cent, it will not follow that provincial contribution in a matched way and fall back as well. That is what I cannot seem to understand. If it would just say that will not happen, then I personally would be satisfied.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I will allow the hon. minister to answer, but we are getting into a debate again on this report stage. We are not going to get past Motion No. 5 today. The hon. Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, for the information of the hon. member, the record clearly speaks for itself. I appreciate his sincerity and his concern. But when we talk about equality and what the federal government's commitment is to those provinces who have difficulty in meeting some of the challenges in agriculture, my hon. colleague, the Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds, pointed to these facts. In the province of Manitoba in 1988–89, some $551 million worth of federal assistance went into the agri-food industry for 91.72 per cent of the total assistance in agriculture to that province. The province provided $107 million for 8.28 per cent. That was 1988–89.

In 1987–88, it was a similar figure of $782 million for the federal government, and $70 million for the provincial government. In 1986–87, it was $521 million provided by the federal government, and $67.9 million by the provincial government. If that does not demonstrate the sincerity and consideration of the federal government in dealing with agriculture crises as they occur, I do not know what is.

Furthermore, let me just point this out once again. He is a constitutional expert and he probably understands legislation as well. We are using essentially the same wording in this bill as has been used in the past. There is no difference. The contracts, the arrangements, and the agreements that have to be negotiated between the provinces and the federal government still have to be negotiated in the same manner. We contribute consistent with the criteria that has been established here. Our bottom line is, we are there for 25 per cent of the action. We have been there for 50 per cent of the action before and there were no questions asked about it. We are here for 25 per cent of the action now.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The question is on Motion No. 5. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

An Hon. Member: On division.

Motion No. 5 agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The next question is on Motion No. 9.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie) moved:

Motion No. 9

That Bill C-48 be amended in Clause 8 by striking out line 42 at page 7 and substituting the following therefor:

"Minister, who may for that purpose consult with representatives of such producer organizations as the Minister considers appropriate, and the Minister shall cause a".

He said: Mr. Speaker, during the course of the discussions on this bill in committee, there was a series of amendments which were aimed at providing the minister with the power to strike a consultative or advisory committee to get feedback from farmers and their organizations as to the operations of the crop insurance legislation.

• (1630)

This is, in effect, the most watered down version that we got to. At the committee level most of the members on the government side decided that they had better vote against it until they found out what the government's thinking was. My understanding is that the government now sees that it would, in fact, enhance the legislation, would not harm it at all, and is, I understand, prepared to accept it.

I will not say any more than that. It is simply a matter of permitting the Minister of Agriculture in the future to strike a committee of producers and users of crop insurance across the country so that he or she can better gauge the effectiveness of the program.

I think it is a necessary adjunct to the act. I hope that my understanding that the government will be providing its assent to this motion is correct. I thank the Minister of Agriculture for having accepted it.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct. I think that it is a reasonable proposal that makes sense when conducting a review of the act that producers be given an opportunity to provide input, guidance and advice with respect to future changes.