

Wheat Acreage Reduction

little games with each other; perhaps we are merely participating in a debating society and exchanging niceties and formalities.

Mr. Woolliams: We are.

Mr. Nystrom: If that is correct, we must bring about some changes to make this institution meaningful to the people of the country—the people who count.

Mr. Woolliams: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nystrom: It is not only the members of this House, members of all political parties, who have been pointing out problems and possible and feasible solutions to them; the people of this country have been mentioning them also. The Premiers of the three Prairie provinces—I refer to the Premier of my province, the Premier of Manitoba and the Premier of Alberta—have sent briefs to the federal government which, although representing different points of view, discuss the same or similar problems. Yet nothing seems to have been done about the problems of those provinces. In the government there are three cabinet ministers from western Canada, the Minister without Portfolio from Saskatchewan (Mr. Lang), and the Minister without Portfolio from Manitoba (Mr. Richardson), the Minister of Agriculture from Alberta (Mr. Olson). They should know what is happening. They have lived in western Canada all their lives. They should be sensitive and responsive to the way people feel out west. They should realize from their mail what is happening in their constituencies.

In addition, the government must be obtaining the views of the National Farmers Union, the wheat pools, the Federation of Agriculture and other farm organizations and private citizens. Yet those views are not being heeded. The government is not responding to the wishes of the people. This behaviour is characteristic. We shall have to solve our agricultural problems really quickly or this country will be in serious trouble.

I think the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the government really do not care what is happening to the western farmer or the Prairie farmer. When farmers tell me they are getting more and angry in my area, quite frankly I do not blame them. What happened last July on the Prairies may be only a beginning to what may happen if something is not done immediately. I cannot overemphasize this. I know many farmers out west, including the people who voted for the hon. member for

[Mr. Nystrom.]

Saskatoon-Humboldt, believe the Prime Minister does not care about them.

Mr. Woolliams: They know.

Mr. Nystrom: They think he has forgotten about them. Personally, I think the Prime Minister does not care; I think he has forgotten about the farmers; I think his attitude toward their problems is callous. He thinks the farmers are expendable. Let us look at the record. During the federal election campaign the Prime Minister said in Winnipeg, in June, 1968, "Let the farmers grow all the wheat they want. We will sell it. Do not worry about it." In November of the same year, after he had won the election, he said, "Why should I sell your wheat?" He is the Prime Minister of this country. The duty and purpose of the Prime Minister and the government is to do collectively what we as individuals cannot do. This is where the Prime Minister has let down the farmers of western Canada.

In February of this year the Prime Minister made a speech to the students of Carleton University. When questioned by the students as to why he was not helping western farmers he said, "When I was out there last summer I was asked by a group to give about \$200 million in cash to western Canada. I don't think they really need it because some of them came to see me on \$12,000 tractors and they probably live on \$100,000 to \$200,000 farms. I don't really think that most of these farmers are very poor." This is a very callous, cold and calculated attitude. I think it should be condemned by all members of this House, especially those from western Canada.

I do not say this with an ideological commitment, but it is no wonder the Premier of Saskatchewan and many provincial Liberals are embarrassed by the federal government. There is one member in this House who knows that—the Minister without Portfolio from Saskatoon-Humboldt (Mr. Lang). I cannot say that I blame the Saskatchewan Liberals, because the activities and inactivities of Ottawa have made the provincial Liberals very fearful about their chances in the next election.

I wish to deal with one or two more items before my time expires. If we look back over the election campaign it is very ironic that the Prime Minister had one issue that overrode all others, that of national unity, not only of bilingualism but economic disparities and inequities as they existed across this