

Prairie Grain Stabilization Act

Mr. Downey:—over the past weeks and during the debate on this bill, short as it may have been, has been pointed out this afternoon. First there was the failure to observe the law that was finally brought to the attention of those not already aware of it. Last weekend there was the betrayal of the trust of the prairie Ministers of Agriculture. I think they left here in good faith, believing that some of their logical and beneficial proposals, would at least be studied by the minister in the following week. The blatant indulgence in deception that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) engaged in last night after the eleven o'clock news was one of the highlights of any deception that I have ever witnessed.

Mr. Osler: Your sidekick said there were a couple of minor errors.

An hon. Member: He read the transcript.

Mr. Downey: Those are minor errors? Today in this House I asked the Prime Minister if the \$70 million that he referred to would actually go into the hands of the farmers, but he did not choose to answer. I do not think he can fool the farmers any longer, however. I have the transcript of the remarks he made on television last night, and he said that \$35 million will be paid out in the present year as against \$30 million, and \$35 million next year as against \$20 million. He knows very well that unless total agricultural products drop below 90 per cent of the five-year average the money will remain there and not be paid out to the farmers. Yet he came on television with a shrugging approach, that convincing approach, and he is trying to sell this—

An hon. Member: Convincing and shrugging—which is it?

Mr. Downey: I saw him shrug, yes; I saw him trying to deceive.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. The Chair regrets having to interrupt the hon. member, but has difficulty in relating his remarks to the amendment before us, which concerns the method of implementing the bill. The Chair would hope that for the purpose of orderly debate the hon. member would return as quickly as possible to the subject matter of the amendment before us.

Mr. Downey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was only after listening to the previous speakers and the range of their remarks that—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Especially the minister.

Mr. Downey: Before I go to another point which you may consider more closely associated with the amendment, Mr. Speaker, I should like to say it is evident to all of us that there are no principles across the way in this government.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Downey: It is merely a union or an alliance—

An hon. Member: A team.

Mr. Downey:—concerned with the power to rule; an unholy alliance to say the least.

An hon. Member: A dictatorship.

Mr. Downey: I should like to read from an act which is still law, the Agricultural Stabilization Act which received royal assent on July 1, 1958, under a Conservative government. I should like to draw parallels between that act and the bill before us. Section 2(1) (a) reads:

in relation to a named commodity—

These are the criteria for increasing farm income under this policy. It went to the 80 per cent formula instead of the 90 per cent formula under the present plan.

in relation to a named commodity, 80 per cent of the base price thereof, or such higher percentage of the base price thereof as the Governor in Council prescribes—

Section 8 (1) provides:

In each year the board shall establish the base price for each agricultural commodity, or the grade, quality, variety, class, type or form thereof, the price of which is to be stabilized under this act.

Section 7 (1) provides:

The board shall from time to time in accordance with this act take such action as is necessary to stabilize the prices of agricultural commodities at their respective prescribed prices, and shall take such action and make such recommendations as are necessary to ensure that the prescribed prices for an agricultural commodity in effect from time to time shall bear a fair relationship to the cost of production of such commodity.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Downey: Here we have a law already on the statute books which has a built-in inflation factor. Let me read that last part again:

—shall bear a fair relationship to the cost of production of such commodity.

An hon. Member: Listen, Otto.

• (9:10 p.m.)

Mr. Downey: Section 5(1) of the act provides:

The minister shall appoint an advisory committee consisting of a chairman and at least six but not more than nine other members composed of farmers and representatives of farm organizations.

That act is in force today, but you come along with all this garbage—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Downey:—and cloud the issue.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Downey: Whereas with a few simple, timely amendments you could have amended this act that is already on the statute books and made it work for the benefit of farmers.

An hon. Member: Boloney.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. I hope hon. members will refrain from addressing each other and will, instead, address the Chair. Hon. members should refer to the constituencies of other hon. members or to the