

*Prairie Grain Stabilization Act*

of this party are concerned is that we have objected to the bill not because of any amount of money in it, but because the stabilization plan is a bad plan for the grain farmers since it will be based initially on a period of five years which are poor years. The average established, therefore, will be a poor average and for the two or three years after that, the farmer will be held down by the poor average on which the stabilization is based.

Second, we object to this stabilization plan because it is based on gross income which does not take into account the cost of production which, as we know from history, is bound to rise every year so that the net situation of the farmer may be worse as a result of this bill rather than better. We are all interested in a better situation for the farmer, including I am sure even the ex-dean of law who is now rapidly becoming the dean of lawlessness, in view of his disregard of his duty under the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act. Now, Mr. Speaker, if that were the subject the government permitted us to discuss, then the farmers of western Canada and eastern Canada would be able to sit down and try to decide what they think of the law. Most of them with whom I have spoken—and I have had occasion to speak to literally thousands of them on the Prairies in the last couple of months—are very much opposed to the bill just for the reason I have given, but the government has not permitted us to have this kind of discussion.

Despite the fact there had been an agreement last Friday that there was to be some kind of—I do not know exactly what to call it—truce or cease fire for a few days, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) went on the air last night and made a statement to the western farmers which I can describe only as being inaccurate and misleading. If the Prime Minister did not know any better, he ought to have made himself more knowledgeable before making those statements. He made statements about the amount of money that would be paid under the bill we are discussing now. He said that there would be \$100 million in payments on a transitional basis. I agree that that is there. Then, he talked about \$35 million in a year and \$35 million the year following. The minister nods his head. I say to the minister, because the Prime Minister is not here, that he does not know and the Prime Minister does not know how much money they will put into the fund two years hence. We do not know what the market will be; we do not know what the price will be, and we do not know what the yield will be or what the weather will be. They are talking out of their hats.

No one can make such a forecast concerning what will happen two years from now. I have often said to farmers in the west and in the east, as a person who has never been a farmer, that they are the real gamblers in Canada. They gamble on the weather, on the market and on the price. Why in heaven's name they gamble with this government is something I have never been able to understand. I say that the Prime Minister and the minister in charge of the Wheat Board are misleading the people of Canada and the western farmers by reciting figures about which they know nothing. They have no idea what the amounts will be. They are misleading the farmers because they fail to tell them the whole truth. The minister knows he is not telling them the whole truth. They fail to remind the farmer that he will have to pay 2 per cent out of his

gross crop revenue into the stabilization fund. Not only is the government to pay 4 per cent but the farmer is to pay 2 per cent. He never mentions that. He never mentions that if this bill passes the farmer will lose what he has now under the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act, and that from now on he will have to pay the cost of storing any surplus grain which formerly was paid out of the federal treasury.

The minister knows that if this bill passes the PFAA will be removed from the statute books. The farmer who used this as a form of crop insurance will now have to enter into another crop insurance scheme for himself. The minister knows that will cost the farmer another one per cent or one and one half per cent of the sale price of his crop. He never tells him that. I say that the Prime Minister and the minister in charge of the Wheat Board are misleading the western farmer and I, as a member of this House, am ashamed of their behaviour in respect of a bill which is as important as this bill which is before us. Last Friday the minister met with the three prairie ministers. I read the statement he made to the press. I was not in Ottawa on Friday afternoon or over the weekend, but I read the statement he made to the press. I shall not quote him but shall give an accurate representation. Reporters quoted him as saying that the three prairie ministers of agriculture made certain suggestions to him, that he and they agreed that there would be an attempt in this House not to proceed with the matter of the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act and that the government would not put Bill C-244 before Parliament today but would take some days—the report said a week—to give serious consideration to what the three prairie ministers of agriculture proposed to the minister.

My colleagues—I did not myself, because I was not here—spoke to the two New Democratic ministers of agriculture from Saskatchewan and Manitoba and were informed that that was the understanding between the two ministers and the minister in charge of the Wheat Board. They told our members that this was the understanding, that there would be a week of delay before this bill came before the House and that the government would give serious consideration in good faith to their proposals in so far as they attached to this bill. This has not been done. The minister in charge of the Wheat Board spoke to our House leader, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) on Friday, and conveyed this information to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre who is sitting right beside me now as he does every day in this House. The minister in charge of the Wheat Board informed the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre that it was his intention that this bill would not come before us today but that the government would take some days—he said not necessarily a week, and my friend will correct me if I am wrong.

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I should like to make a correction in respect of what the hon. member is saying. I must say I should do so in respect of quite a number of things he has been saying. Since he said these things in my presence this might leave the impression that I am in some way agreeing. At all times the request to which he refers was from the prairie ministers. At all times it was conveyed as being that to the government and