

statements which are being made, recognizing that they come from practical people.

Many times I have said in this House since I came here about three years ago that we need more practical individuals to deal with problems affecting our agricultural community. Unfortunately, I seem to make no impression with my view. We involve ourselves with people coming from universities, with people who have never been on a farm in their lives, with people who really don't give a damn whether or not the agricultural economy survives in this country.

This is one of the main questions which I am asked when I tour my constituency. I am asked whether there are any practical people involved in the decision-making process. This in itself is one of the most important areas which we as parliamentarians should be considering. The statement of May 7 by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture—I am surprised that the minister had not read it before the question period today—is as follows:

It is clearly and unmistakably the federal government's responsibility to ensure that the special payment is made, and made soon, while also ensuring that adequate opportunity is given for the consideration, modification and improvement of the long-term proposals contained in the bill.

At some point, Mr. Speaker, it appears the minister ought at least to consider that there should be two sections to the bill which he could quite easily bring before this House. There would then, in my humble opinion, be no difficulty in having the fundamental portion of the bill referred to the committee in order that we could look at the proposal in greater depth than we can in the House at this time. As long as the minister continues to talk about a \$100 million stabilization plan, when in effect he is talking about \$560 per individual, this debate could continue for quite some time. I believe that the minister and the cabinet will have to accept responsibility if the farmers receive only the paltry \$560 to which I have referred.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture continued in its brief:

The urgent necessity of immediately supplementing the incomes of prairie farmers is clearly seen in the disastrous figures on farm income recently released by the Bureau of Statistics.

I read those figures to the House. It would also be worth while, Mr. Speaker, to read another paragraph from the brief of Canadian Federation of Agriculture:

It must be recognized that this bill is clearly designed to place definite limits on the federal obligation to support prairie income even in the face of chronic income inadequacy.

Perhaps the minister would look up from his seat for a moment and realize that there is a chronic income inadequacy contained in the legislation introduced into this House of Commons. It would appear to me that the least the minister could do would be to realize that right now there is a problem in the rural areas of Canada. He should realize there is something which he could do immediately, that is, divorce the two issues dealt with in the legislation before us.

Another quotation I should like to use is taken from a statement issued by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. A

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resolution passed in February urges that the Canadian Wheat Board's jurisdiction be expanded to cover the marketing of flax, rye and rapeseed. Further, that the federal government should guarantee initial prices at realistic levels for each grain. No attempt has yet been made by the government to do this. It may be an attempt has been made to guarantee a basic level for each grain which, in fact, as has been pointed out many times, is a poverty level.

In fact, as I pointed out the other day, the individual grain producer is not making more than four cents a bushel on his grain. This is a disgrace, to say the least. It is a disgrace that the government should sit back and do nothing for a producer who cannot make more than four cents a bushel on his grain. Another point made by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool is that an adequate grain reserve should be established to meet all market demands, the costs shared jointly by producers and government. When we look at today's situation we realize there is no adequate grain reserve.

• (8:30 p.m.)

In a quotation attributed to the minister himself he suggests that there can be other areas where individual farmers can make private arrangements with elevator companies to store grain; that this could be done despite the amount of grain presently in the elevators.

What surprises me most of all is that the minister has said many times in this House that we need space available in elevators to meet any situation demanding immediate attention. With this I agree wholeheartedly. But in the next breath the minister goes on to say that private arrangements may be made by individual farmers to use country elevators for storage. This makes me wonder whether the government is really concerned to see that grain storage space is available. I suggest it is high time this situation was looked into.

I should like to remind the minister of one of the proposals submitted by him on October 29 of last year. It concerns encouraging adjustment of farm units to a more efficient size. The minister proposed:

The problem of farm consolidation is one which is not peculiar to the prairie region and which, perhaps, is less critical in this region than in other areas of Canada. It is therefore believed that it would be inappropriate to propose programs for the prairie region to deal with the consolidation issue in advance of the availability of programs to deal with this problem in Canadian agriculture generally. Such a general plan is in preparation.

I should like to ask the minister just what he means by encouraging adjustment of farm units to a more efficient size, if he is not in fact talking about corporation farms. I suggest the government should be charged with wanting to destroy the family farm, especially in view of proposals like the one I have referred to and the introduction of legislation that does not explain what the government is talking about. I believe that if the minister is interested in rural life in western Canada, he is obligated at this time to indicate just what he means by encouraging adjustment of farm units to a more efficient size.