

### *Government Orders*

It does make some dramatic changes. It will reduce the amount of grain that is in store and will be shipped. It will reduce the amount of money that goes through the western economy by way of fertilizers, herbicides and all the things that go into creating a crop.

• (1820)

Farmers do not like this kind of pressure and these kinds of choices. They have also been told quite clearly that if they are not signed into GRIP or NISA or both, if there is a third line of defence payment, which is the new buzz-word for the hoped for deficiency payment for the 1990-91 income shortfall, they will not be considered for that payment.

They are very much in a quandary. They are feeling weak because they have had a series of bad years. While they produced quite a bit of grain last year, there is no particular relief in the bank account or in the accounts due, so they are going to join.

Some civil servants sat in on the committee hearings who came up to me afterward and said: "How does this pressure work? Why would farmers sign when they are put under these kinds of strains? Why do they not just stand up for themselves and say no?"

I said: "Put yourself in their shoes. Maybe the best way for you to understand this would be to consider that you and all civil servants in Ottawa were fired last week. The government left you without jobs, and five months later it came to you and said: You can have your job back and we will pay each one of you \$7,000 a year". They said: "But this is voluntary. You do not have to do it". I said: "I bet over 90 per cent of you would sign up, because there is no other option for farmers". That is the kind of situation that the federal and provincial governments are taking advantage of with these agreements.

We are not going to see the kind of results the government spelled out when it introduced this legislation and this program. You do not have to be a rocket scientist to understand that this is not a market responsive program. You do not have to be a genius to know that it will disrupt the rotation of crops, because forage crops did not get included in this program.

There will be some predisposition among some farmers to break up some of those acres that are in forage crops. There will be some tendency to shift acreage from the rather small acreages at the moment in specialty

crops to take advantages of the fairly high price guarantees for those crops.

There will be a tendency for people to retire early, dispose of their farm, divide it up among family members. All of this will happen and we will have the kind of stories we hear around the coffee shops, where one guy at a meeting I was at said: "Look, I pull chaff wagons behind my combines. I am smart enough to be able to measure when I should be putting \$4 wheat in the combine hopper and \$2.50 wheat out the back end". Those are the very crass and crude definitions that are going to be applied in order to maintain themselves.

This is the end of seven or eight very hard years for prairie farmers and grain farmers right across the country. Farmers will do what they have to do in order to survive. We will permit that to happen with the passage of this legislation, with the hope that like the Wheat Board legislation in 1935, future governments and future opportunities will arise so that the next series of agreements will provide truly the kind of program the farmers set out to establish when they made their initial report leading up to this legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Papproski):** I thought the hon. member for Mackenzie was going to be the last speaker, but I notice that the hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre has about a 10 minute speech.

**Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a few remarks with respect to this bill.

• (1825)

The details and the ins and outs of this bill have been discussed many times over, but I think it is appropriate to make a few general comments with respect to this legislation and with respect to the future of rural Canada, family farms, and particularly western Canada.

There has been a need for a permanent farm program for some time, a program that has been promised since 1985. Bill C-98 does allow that program. However, being enabling legislation, we are not sure of the full details of the program and we do not know exactly what is coming out. We are somewhat in the dark. Farmers in my riding and farmers in western Canada are concerned about the future of rural Canada and about the future of family farms. While the government is asking farmers to trust it with Bill C-98, the farmers are saying: "We have trusted you in the past and look what you have done to us."