

of the Saskatchewan relief commission. Sometimes the Prime Minister will say: "We hold ourselves responsible for the administration of these moneys that we are giving to the provinces." At least we understand him to say that. But then when we put questions to him at close range or make complaints he will say: "That is a matter for the province. They are handling this through a commission." The house will recall that when this matter was up before the hon. member for Weyburn drew the attention of the Prime Minister for the first time to the fact that for every little mite of assistance that was given to the farmers they had to sign a promissory note in advance. I call that a loan policy, but it was called a relief, and the Prime Minister did not know anything about that until the hon. member brought it to his attention. Later on it was my duty to call his attention to the way in which seed grain relief was being given to the farmers, with a seed grain lien being taken on the coming crop to be realized on, if thought advisable, by the middle of August this year or at any time thereafter. I drew attention to the nature of that seed grain lien. I never saw such an exacting one. It tied the farmer up so tightly, as if with a logging chain, that he could not blink an eyelash or wiggle a toe. That may be necessary, but when everybody else apparently is getting his contribution free with no provision for the return, for instance, of the five cents a bushel bonus, why is there this provision for the return of every rag that is put on the backs of these people by the relief commission, or a promise to pay at all events? Is that to continue? The government has announced that it cannot afford any longer, and the provinces cannot afford any longer, to go on with relief works to provide employment. I am not going to criticize that to-day either. That was the inevitable result of the government's policies in connection with other matters to which I shall not now refer. If these conditions lasted long enough the government was bound to reach the point that they have now reached, that of giving direct relief. That can be done with less money. Nevertheless, it is the dole. I have no right to speak for the other two western provinces, but there are parts of Manitoba and Alberta that are in the same position that a very large portion of Saskatchewan was in, and I would ask this question: Is it the policy of the government, through the Saskatchewan government, and in turn through the relief commission, again to have everybody between now and the coming of the next crop sign a promissory note before he is given any more assistance? If they

want to put in winter rye and require seed rye, will more seed grain liens be registered against their property?

I think my questions have been fair, and I hope hon. members opposite will not suggest that they have been asked in an improper spirit. I do not think the minister takes that view. I have asked my questions earnestly and when we reach the second reading of the bill, I will expect a reply as full as the minister is capable of giving. If we are to have a dole for all of Canada, why should these prairie areas which have been so distressed be exempted from the dole, and promissory notes imposed upon them? I believe that is a fair question. However I do not wish it to be thought that we are ungrateful for what has been done, because that is not so. I do not know what would have happened to thousands of people had they not had assistance. They have had assistance many times in the past, too, I am sorry to admit.

Mr. GORDON: When were seed grain loans first started?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Oh, it was before my time.

Mr. GORDON: Away back in 1876, I think.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I believe that is right.

Mr. GORDON: And I think they are not paid yet.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I know it was away back in the seventies before my time. We could go back to the Selkirk settlers who, I believe, received loans from the home government. The same thing happened in Ontario. Away back in the early days of the last century, shortly after the year 1800, they received all sorts of equipment from the home government and from friends in the old land to begin their settlements in the bush. I am very sorry the practice has had to be continued so long. The fact is, however, we are living in a country which forty or fifty years ago was not considered at all favourably, and there was a feeling that western Canada was nothing but a buffalo run. That country has been reclaimed through the efforts of hardy pioneers, and development has been accomplished only through great labour and risks taken by those early settlers. At intervals they have had to have assistance. When it comes to the disposition of the government's assistance, we do not want to be discriminated against, as we believe we have