

*Prairie Grain Stabilization Act*

we do want to find a means of ensuring an adequate degree of stability in western Canada.

In the grain stabilization bill now before us we have a very specific set of proposals. As I have already indicated to the minister, I have no disagreement or no quarrel with the fact that we have a very specific, detailed plan in this bill. At least we are able to form an adequate judgment on the bill as it is before us. It is a specific plan. It does not simply lay down guidelines, broad criteria, or just provide enabling authority for the government to establish a plan.

It already has been noted in the debate this evening that some farm organizations have expressed approval of the grain stabilization proposals. The hon. member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Pringle) said that the Palliser Grain Growers Association have expressed themselves in favour of the grain stabilization bill as it is. That is their privilege. They are entitled to present their views. But I think it needs to be noted for the record that many other organizations have continued to express their dissatisfaction with this bill and in fact are now expressing themselves in stronger terms.

I have in my hand a news release issued by the Alberta Wheat Pool last Thursday, September 30, under the name of G. L. Harrold, president of the organization. His news release states as follows:

Alberta Wheat Pool's position concerning proposals recently mentioned in the House of Commons have previously been made clear. It seems necessary to reiterate them again.

This organization does not believe the grains receipts and income stabilization plan as it is presently written provides adequate provisions for maintaining economic health in western grain production.

I am sure there are other members of the House who will agree that the Alberta Wheat Pool is a responsible organization and would not make such a statement unless it had given the matter thorough study and had come to the conclusion that the bill now before us is very inadequate. I am sure all hon. members recently received from the secretary of the Alberta Wheat Pool a letter setting out certain criticisms of Bill C-244. Mr. Broughton in his letter pointed out that since the Alberta Wheat Pool made their submission to the House of Commons standing committee on June 1, the members of his association have become even better informed on its provisions and the association had received further expressions of opinion from them. I quote:

We need hardly mention that they are less than complimentary. It was a shock to many producers to realize during the summer that the Canadian Wheat Board had not received any payments during the crop year under the provisions of the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act. Quite naturally, grain producers had operated during the year in the belief that the act was in force and that its provisions could be counted upon in the grain income picture. The realization it was not, was extremely disappointing.

We have, in the interval, also heard on an informal basis from a good number of our members, their viewpoints on the stabilization plan as proposed. It again seems to have failed entirely to capture their support. While no producers are now in doubt that the plan is one for stabilization of the grain producing industry as a whole on the prairies, they relate it quite naturally to their own operations and circumstances. Localized mishaps—

I wish to emphasize this point because I feel it has not been given adequate consideration in the debate so far. The minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board (Mr. Lang) has pointed out on a number of occasions that

[Mr. Burton.]

practically every significant criticism of the plan was based on putting more money into it. But there is another problem with respect to the provisions of the bill. It is the lack of equity in the plan in terms of the method of operation set out in the bill. This point is dealt with by the Alberta Wheat Pool in the following paragraph:

• (9:00 p.m.)

Localized mishaps such as occurred this year through the Bertha armyworm attack on rapeseed can leave an individual farmer or groups of farmers with no income from that crop and under circumstances where the total prairie picture is relatively unaffected, these farmers could expect no assistance from the proposed stabilization plan. This is small comfort to the individual and we believe, will be a continuing and strong influence in his attitude toward the plan. An additional feature is the 2 per cent deduction on any gross grain income which he may have.

As has been pointed out on many occasions, this will take from many farmers whatever net income they have left as a result of the current situation. The contribution to be made by the federal government to the grain stabilization plan has been discussed in this debate, and we heard the remarks of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) on television last night. I now have a transcript of that broadcast.

**Mr. Osler:** It is more than your leader had today.

**Mr. Burton:** It came in the mail just tonight. One of the statements of the Prime Minister was:

Let's first compare them in terms of money.

He was referring to the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act and the grain stabilization program.

For the last crop year, under the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act, we would be in process of paying the western farmer \$62 million, for the crop year which we are now in—

I think there is no quarrel with the figure of \$62 million, Mr. Speaker, but the Prime Minister was wrong when he said:

... we would be in process of paying the western farmer \$62 million, for the crop year which we are now in—

I think it should be pointed out that under the terms of that act the process should now be completed, because all the payments should have been made in 12 monthly instalments between August 1, 1970, and July 1, 1971.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Order, please. I regret having to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired.

**An hon. Member:** Continue.

**Some hon. Members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Unless there is unanimous consent, the hon. member may not continue. There does not appear to be unanimous consent.

**Mr. Mahoney:** We already heard it. Gleave gave us that.

**Mr. Burton:** It might do you good to listen to somebody else for a change.

**Mr. Cliff Downey (Battle River):** Mr. Speaker, the pattern of deception that the government has engaged in—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mahoney:** Heigh ho, Silver!