

*Government Orders*

by going with the one-third, one-third, and one-third sharing, the risk would be spread to everybody.

The 90 per cent provision would increase coverage to a maximum of 90 per cent of the probable yield in the area with respect to any farm. The increased coverage would be optional, and not all crops would be subject to the increased coverage. It would be only the low risk crops, and Ontario corn would be one that would fit into that group.

The current act offers production guarantees reflecting the long-term average. The new amendment would base coverage on a probable or expected yield process. This would permit adjustment for exceptionally high or low occurrences while accounting for productivity increases due to technological advance or management skill improvements. For example, the new probable yield would be based on a 10-year trend line as opposed to the 20 to 30-year average.

If the government had accepted the recommendations of the farmers for a tripartite sharing of the costs, I personally could support this bill. The original act has served us well for a lot of years, but it is time for a change. Unless the government does bring in some amendments like that, either at second reading or at committee, then I will have to go against this particular bill.

I look back a few years to the task force report entitled "Economic Growth—A Study Team Report". It was the task force on program review on agriculture. This report is dated February, 1985 and is referred to as the Nielsen task force.

When one looks at some of the recommendations one sees that it certainly has laid out the direction that this government has taken in agriculture over the last several years. One of the things that shocked me was that in this report there were several pages of acknowledgements of people who contributed to this report, including various assistant deputy ministers, department people, a lot of organizations, a lot of individuals, many of whom are academics.

I could only find the names of two farmers. One of these farmers is from Buffalo, Alberta, and the other is the President of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. These were the only two farmers who were consulted,

according to this task force report. I think that is despicable because it is the livelihood of farmers that is at stake. There are literally thousands of farmers in Saskatchewan who are going to be forced off their land this winter through no fault of their own. They had no input into this document that has obviously set the program and the policy of this government.

This policy has resulted in a forecast loss of income for the coming year. I believe it was in *The Globe and Mail* on December 8, where the minister himself stated that one of the biggest factors in the loss of income to farmers in the coming year was the fact that the program expenditures of Agriculture Canada were cut back dramatically.

There were recommendations in the task force report regarding the At and East legislation. It says it does not serve as a vital link in Canadian grain trade. I would have to suggest that the At and East program is a very vital program that provides western Canadian grain to the mills and the ports in Atlantic Canada. There is a bill before the House at the present time, I believe, to dismantle that program. That was one of those identified in the budget last year. It was going to be discontinued. That, of course, is in this task force report.

• (1630)

The crop insurance is touched on here as well in this Nielsen task force report. It makes recommendations suggesting that producers should pay more of the cost. That is one of the options that is suggested. It also suggests that the federal government pay 30 per cent of the actuarial cost. That is the one I am hoping the federal government will look at and increase not just to 30 per cent from the 25 per cent proposed in this bill but up to 33-1/3 per cent.

This task force report also talks about privatizing the Farm Credit Corporation. It talks about eliminating the Consolidated Revenue Fund borrowings and privatizing this institution which has provided money to the farmers over many years. It served very well until it became so harsh and unrelenting on those in arrears in those last three or four years. Policies are forcing farmers off the land through no fault of their own, policies that are not acceptable to the economic conditions of agriculture in Canada today.