

Prairie Grain Stabilization Act

That is why I wish to support the amendment now under consideration which, in my opinion, is a fair one. As a matter of fact, it is not a matter of opposing the government, but of giving the people the assurance that the best possible legislation is adopted.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of these letters reads in part as follows:

As a member of the Committee on Agriculture I ask you to take the following positions on Bill C-244.

It is a suggestion, a recommendation.

For a few days now we have been hearing discussions relating to the introduction of motions whose purpose is to raise a debate on the non payment of grants, support payments which were to be made under the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act. I even attended a debate which went on as late as 2.30 in the morning on this subject. I consider that under the circumstances, if we want to be really objective, we will have to reach a conclusion and we will if the suggestions and recommendations of interested producers are given some consideration. Here is what is suggested in the same letter:

Separate the payment of the \$100 million from the rest of the legislation and refuse to consider Bill C-244 until the government has made such payment.

Mr. Speaker, I know that when people expect payments for work performed, even the sale of products, it is always encouraging for those who believe in the legislation to see that it is enforced and provides at least the expected benefits. But the matter under discussion is whether Parliament will take production costs into account under Bill C-244.

• (8:50 p.m.)

A moment ago, I listened to the minister responsible for the Wheat Board (Mr. Lang) make a remark that I considered serious. While one of my colleagues was delivering his speech, he said: In short, what is the production cost? As a matter of fact, it can vary from one province to the next, but not to the extent of causing serious prejudice to the western farmer. One must take the average into account, not only in clause 2 of Bill C-244, but also in any law dealing with the various classes of society.

I believe that when we are really aware of our responsibilities, it will be possible to understand one another more quickly on the contents of Bill C-244, and I invite the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board to lend a careful ear to suggestions even though they may be those of the opposition. It does not mean they are all bad. Some of them may be sound. Regardless of party politics, we are here in this House to consider those proposals seriously and to incorporate them into the law for the good of the whole society.

That is why I made a few remarks to the House on clause 2 and the amendment of the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar. We also wanted to prove our community of interests with other Canadians, even those of the riding of Ontario represented by the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters), who is not a wheat producer.

Mr. Speaker, at times I find it unfortunate that the opposition be accused of filibustering. It is perhaps true in some cases, but I would like to say that, since I have been in Parliament, although time may have sometimes been

[Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse).]

wasted on the consideration of certain measures, in general—the average must always be taken into account—we have worked seriously—

Mr. La Salle : That is not bad.

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): The hon. member for Joliette says that is not bad. Surely that is not bad, because he himself often took part in debates on bills introduced in the House. I am convinced that his contributions then were not designed to delay the passing of government bills, but to make sure that Canada is better served by the Canadian Parliament through better laws.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is in that spirit that the member for Bellechasse wishes to work here, and it is in that same spirit that he wants to support the amendment under consideration, reserving the right during later consideration of Bill C-244 to make the remarks which he will deem expedient.

Finally, I would like my friends, the western farmers, the wheat or grain producers, to know that their message reached the House, and that the member for Bellechasse was glad to act as their spokesman, as a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

[English]

Mr. Jerry Pringle (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. Members: Chicken.

Mr. Pringle: I have heard considerable abuse in this House of Commons, especially from the far end to my left, but I doubt if I have ever heard more abuse than I heard this evening, abuse which I think is completely unjustified and which I am sure will start farmers thinking because, although those hon. members may not realize it, farmers do think.

I have been doing business with farmers in western Canada for 30 years and I have worked on costs of production. For 20 years we have been struggling and striving to find a standard way in which to establish the costs of production of farm products, which is the subject under discussion. It is a subject that has been in the forefront of the agricultural business for as long as I can remember. I could name dozens of programs carried out by universities on costs of production. I can tell you of occasions when farmers themselves arranged to have research programs carried out. The experts can establish that one and one make two, just like the slide-rule boys do, but it is impossible to incorporate all the variables and the human elements. This is something that is not peculiar to farm products.

Is it not strange that a new provincial government comes into power and within a few months it suddenly comes up with some kind of deal that has never before been proven, that has never been worked, and says, "This is how you find the costs of production of agricultural products." I can tell you the situation of two farmers, farming side by side and supposedly operating the same way, using the same feed, and each had 5,000 pullets. They kept records and at the end of a year one farmer came up with a figure of \$1 net per pullet and the other came up with a figure of \$3.25 net.