

perfectly honourably and perfectly legally. He said the citizens of this country should be protected against wrongdoing on the part of certain persons at election time. He protested against using the money of farmers which should be held in trust to pay for the improper activities of those political wardheelers.

The hon. member for Red Deer acted honourably and the hon. member for Swift Current-Maple Creek (Mr. Hamilton) acted honourably. All of us, as politicians, acting on principles of British equity and justice, kept our mouths shut. Why? The matter was before the Auditor General and the fraud squad of the RCMP and we trusted our national police force to do the proper thing. They tried hard and succeeded partially. Only five substantive bits of evidence were collected. Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to get a man accused of criminal fraud to convict himself. The police did their duty, investigated the charge and turned the matter over to the representatives of the attorney general of Saskatchewan. Several of us have read the transcript of that preliminary hearing before the judge, and even a layman can tell that the particular representative of the Crown attorney's office acting as prosecutor should be sent back to school. The judge listened to the evidence. It was transcribed; the transcript is 68 pages long. The judge said there was enough evidence to commit this man for trial and so recommended.

We acted properly, kept our mouths shut, turned what evidence we had over to the legal people, and supplied more. There is still more to come. The police did their duty, the Auditor General's department did its duty, and the judge did his duty. I ask, why has the trial not proceeded? Why has it not taken place? Rarely, indeed, does a provincial attorney general not proceed with a trial if a judge recommends it should go ahead. The usual reason for not proceeding is that one of the main witnesses dies, flees the country or is bumped off. Our laws afford every protection possible to the criminal. These men are not criminals. They are typical examples of Liberal wardheelers, typical examples of the sort of people who have been active in politics in Saskatchewan in the last 40 years. They are protégés of the Gardiner machine.

When the Liberals were thrown out in Saskatchewan, and then at the federal level, we thought that machine was finished. But, by gosh, when the Liberals were returned federally in 1963, and particularly in 1968, they tried to rebuild it. I have lived under machine politics and do not like it. I remember the days when, as the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) observed our only protection lay in the game laws of the province. As a young man I worked as a hired help on the farm. I wanted to move up in the world and become a municipal secretary. I even thought I might become a teacher after some training. Mr. Speaker, I could not become a municipal secretary. I could not even get into school unless I had the approval of the local Liberal MLA. My freedom to seek the employment I liked was curtailed. Now you know why I and others like me sit on this side of the House.

Mr. Kaplan: Do you mean that you would be a Liberal if you were in Ontario?

Prairie Farm Assistance Act

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): I have tried to show what happens under machine-type politics. Wherever a machine rears its head, you will find me fighting against it. I do not like it. What we are witnessing here in response to the hon. member's motion is a cover-up, by members on the government side, of what is legitimate information.

● (1730)

I am going to read into the record the charge against just one man. This has the stamp of the Department of the Attorney General in Saskatchewan. The document is dated October 1, 1975. I am not a lawyer so hon. members will pardon me if I just give the big print. The information reads:

On behalf of Her Majesty the Queen

This is the information of Inspector J. Keith DANE of Regina, Saskatchewan, peace officer, hereinafter called the informant.

He had done his duty, he collected his evidence.

The informant says that he has reasonable and probable grounds to believe and does believe that Howard Ernest Buchan of Regina, Saskatchewan between the 1st day of May A.D. 1974 and the 16th day of August A.D. 1974—

Purely by accident, that is the period covering the election.

—at Regina in the Province of Saskatchewan did by deceit, falsehood or other fraudulent means defraud the public in general and the Government of Canada of the sum of three hundred and ninety nine dollars and seventy eight cents (\$399.78) by making or causing to be made, false and fictitious travelling expense accounts and work reports for John Kormendy contrary to Section 338(1) of the Criminal Code of Canada.

That was the charge. The judge listened to the evidence of this man. It points to Buchan, an appointee of this government, for no other reason than he was part of the Gardiner machine, trusted to look after the farmers' money under PFAA.

The judge said there should be a trial; the Attorney General said no. He will have to answer for that. I became concerned about it and wrote to him. He replied on July 14, 1976, and I quote:

The decision to enter the Stay of Proceedings was made on the basis of the recommendations of this department's legal staff—

If we have to rely on that, God help this country.

—which were based entirely upon a consideration of evidential and legal matters. I am advised that there was not at any time any communication between any federal department or official, and any member of my department with respect to this prosecution.

Why would the Attorney General put in a gratuitous observation like that? I had not asked that question. What was bothering him to offer that proposal? No one from Ottawa approached me about this. It is a purely legal matter. He went on, and this is the key:

It is the duty of the prosecutor, notwithstanding an order of committal for trial, to review the evidence after the preliminary hearing to determine whether or not there is in fact a proper case to place before the trial court. The prosecution's allegations in this case were based entirely upon certain statements made by a Mr. John Kormendy, an accomplice.

I am not in a position to express an opinion on the quality of this evidence, but in substance the Attorney General turned down this request for a trial by the judge on the ground that the evidence came from one of the partners in the crime. This