

*Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act*

1968, \$840,341,600 under the Colombo Plan. Commonwealth countries in Africa received \$49,631,000. Where did the money come from? The other African States received \$19,193,200. Where did the money come from? Besides, the Commonwealth countries received \$28,334,000.

I make those remarks in order to tell the government where it can get the money to help the western farmers. It can take it where it did when it made those gifts and I maintain what I said this morning—if it really wants to help the western as well as the eastern farmer.

We must give subsidies to the farmer and stop allowing him to go deep into debt, under the philosophy of credit that exists at the economic level. I say that the farmer, far from getting out of his financial difficulties, is worse off afterwards. We must absolutely, as the previous speakers pointed out, help our farmers as we help foreign countries. We want for the farmer the same treatment that is given to foreign countries. Moreover, if we want to lend to him, we must do it in the same way as we do to foreign countries.

Having granted 60-year interest-free loans of more than \$60 million to India and of \$46,263,000 to Pakistan, and having also granted loans to more than 40 other countries, free of interest or at rates of  $\frac{3}{4}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, I feel that we are rich enough to help Canadians.

When our farmers are living in dire poverty, I wonder why the government sends billions of dollars to foreign countries. However, when we ask for a few millions to help Canadian farmers, we are told that there is not enough money, and the Prime Minister tells us: We are not going to print dollars.

But did we print dollars to grant interest-free loans of over \$1 billion? Certainly not. Credit was created through the Bank of Canada and that is all what we want for the Canadian people. Let us stop laughing at the people! Let us stop acting as disguised actors in our rotten system, and let us help the farmers with the same kind of assistance which we extend to foreign countries. We do not ask for more.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that our farmers will be satisfied with this aid. We are not asking for the impossible, we are not asking to create anything that does not exist, we merely want to use that which is created by the government from nothing—and I repeat created from nothing—new credit for foreign countries. We do a little more for those countries: we borrow at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent to lend

[Mr. Gauthier.]

interest free. I think this is most ridiculous. Some respectable ministers come and tell us seriously in this house that borrowing at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent to lend interest free to foreign countries is good business. I just cannot understand a word when I hear people telling us that this is mere common sense.

But when it comes to spend two or three million dollars to assist our farmers, to help our largest industry employing the greatest number of people to get back on its feet, we are turned down. Then we are given childish answers as the one the Prime Minister gave us today when he said: We are going to print dollars. He knows better than I do how the actual monetary system works. He knows very well that money supply is made up of 90 per cent of monetary credit and that banknotes are very secondary. They have the same role as a postage stamp in our monetary system. He knows it very well. Let him stop making fun of the people. People are aware of those things today because they have been kept informed for the last seven or eight years. They know it is a joke.

All we are asking the Minister of Agriculture—as a former Social Credit member, he knows at least how to proceed—is to start making credit available to farmers on the west coast so they will not have to borrow money from finance companies. If he gave them real material and financial help, I think it would be a good start.

This bill will be a first step towards really assisting all the farmers of Canada.

● (2:10 p.m.)

[English]

**Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin):** Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak on this bill I must say that I support the allocation of up to \$600 to a farmer under the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act for the purpose of drying grain. I think this is most important and is long overdue. Unfortunately, however, because of the lateness of the proposal, the ability of the farmers to dry grain harvested in the exceedingly damp and wet fall of 1968 has been seriously compromised. The gravity of the tough and damp grain situation has not been realized by the government. It has been pointed out by many of those in the farming industry that the problem is serious, that there are many millions of bushels of grain that have not been dried and even with the very best of care much of it will spoil resulting in a reduced value on the market. Although there is much talk, and it is true, that a farmer can by a great deal of work dry grain on his farm in the spring when the