

zation plan based on gross income will only serve the function of stabilizing farm incomes for small farmers at current levels of near poverty.

It is obvious that if rising costs of production are not taken into account in calculating grain sale proceeds, proceeds could go up and still result in losses for the farmer in terms of net farm income—and net farm income is what the farmer lives on. Many of the current difficulties in western Canada are the result of costs of production increasing at a much faster rate than proceeds from sales. Indeed, while costs of production have consistently risen, prices received for farm products have in many cases dropped. Thus, it is entirely conceivable under this plan for gross income to increase or to drop only marginally, therefore no payments under the plan would be made, while at the same time actual net farm income might drop.

There is absolutely no justice for calling a plan which would promote such a situation an income stabilization plan. It might be called a fire insurance plan, but let no one believe that it will contribute to the stabilization of prairie farming communities. The unwillingness of the government to even give cursory consideration to the concept of net farm income as the basis of this plan is just one more example of the government's determination to drive the small prairie farmer off his land in the name of efficiency, without regard for the tragic social consequences of such action.

What does a man of 55 or 60 years of age, who has been a farmer all his life, trained as a farmer and with no other training in industry or commerce, do when he is forced off his land? He moves to the city and looks for a job. In the cities in this country there are people who, despite the fact they have spent their lives in industry, are looking for jobs. They have been forced out of work and laid off. What does the farmer do under these circumstances? Can the government really tell us that it is more desirable to have farmers wandering around cities looking for work than to have them on the land productively employed in producing the agricultural products necessary to sustain life? That is what this plan will do.

The time has come to demonstrate that the west will no longer stand for legislation which has as its effect the destruction of its culture and its way of life. We are drawing the line on this side of the House at Bill C-244. We are insisting that this bill be changed so it is based on net income, will provide real income support for the small farmers and some sustenance for the western way of life. That is what this debate is really all about. That is why we on this side of the House are not giving up. That is why we will continue to fight this bill until we get some change.

The government has not heard the last of the three prairie ministers. They will be back here to raise the same points. The minister has probably seen and heard enough about net farm income. He is probably sick of the phrase. But if he is sick of it now, he should wait and see how sick he will be in a short time if he refuses to listen.

An hon. Member: Bring it to a vote.

Mr. Rowland: My friends on the other side suggest we should bring this to a vote.

An hon. Member: Some of them are westerners.

Prairie Grain Stabilization Act

Mr. Rowland: This bill will come to a vote when the minister has made the changes necessary to see that it serves the needs of the western farmers. There is not one western member representing an agricultural constituency who has spoken in favour of this bill. There is a reason for that.

An hon. Member: The minister has spoken.

Mr. Rowland: Someone suggests that the minister has spoken, and he represents a western agricultural constituency. I doubt very much whether the minister's words in cabinet were the same as we heard in this House. If they were, he is not the member we thought he was because he should be fighting for western Canada. I suggest he has been shot down. He could not persuade his cabinet colleagues and now comes to us with this half-baked plan.

With the legions and legions of members on that side of the House from Ontario and Quebec, it is understandable that they may not know what this legislation will do to western Canada; but it is understood on this side of the House. We represent western Canada and we cannot allow it to pass without change.

I think there might be general agreement to call it ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker, since my voice is giving out.

An hon. Member: You have two minutes left.

Mr. Rowland: If there is no agreement, I will continue to croak on until the clock has run its course.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Call it ten o'clock.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, has anyone on the government side checked with the powers-that-be and been authorized to state that we will be continuing with this bill tomorrow?

Mr. Lang: I think it can be expected that we will continue with the item that we have been debating tonight.

Mr. Dinsdale: His master's voice.

An hon. Member: He might change his mind tomorrow.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Are you sure it will not be changed?

Mr. Horner: You had better check with the authorities.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

PUBLIC SERVICE—EXTENSION OF REGIONAL PAY DIFFERENTIALS

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, before I join the rush to enjoy whatever delights there