

*Unemployment Relief*

Mr. GARDINER: If you would not make so many agreements with other groups, perhaps you would get somewhere.

Mr. PERLEY: We will attend to that a little later. I may say that in the last session there used to be many of these interruptions. I should like to make just one speech while the Minister of Agriculture was glued to his seat. I was going to give him a little credit. The Prairie Farm Assistance Act which was passed at the regular session of 1939 was a relief measure and it cannot be dissociated from this measure. But as I say, many of the farmers who qualified for the bonus did not receive it in time to have it do good. It was provided that sixty per cent of the bonus would be paid in December and forty per cent in March. Under the survey which was made certain townships qualified, but that survey was inefficient. I believe politics were played to quite an extent. I could show a number of letters in proof of that, if I so desired.

The bonus cheques which should have been delivered in December were withheld or delayed until March. Many of these were not received until March 21, a day or so before the election. Hon. members will appreciate the distress which the non-receipt of these cheques would cause to farmers having a crop of only five, eight or twelve bushels to the acre. These bonus cheques were not received in time, and the farmers were cut off relief. The municipalities should have made the survey in the first place. They eventually had to do it during the election campaign. If these farmers had received their bonus cheques in December they could have provided—

Mr. GARDINER: On a point of order, if I attempted to answer the hon. member at this time I would be declared out of order. When we come to discuss the estimates dealing with this matter, there will be plenty of opportunity for debate. I think the hon. member is out of order.

Mr. PERLEY: Not at all. The minister spoke the other night, and he was allowed what the hon. member for Témiscouata (Mr. Pouliot) referred to as lots of latitude and longitude.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Jean): I am not giving a decision on the point of order, but I think the hon. member should restrict his remarks to section 3 of the bill.

Mr. PERLEY: That section provides for agreements to be made with the provinces for the relief of agricultural distress. This bill is a relief measure, as was the Prairie Farm Assistance Act. That act was an insurance and relief measure; a little of both, but not enough of either.

[Mr. Perley.]

Mr. GARDINER: Nothing to do with this bill at all.

Mr. PERLEY: I am making a point that farmers were cut off relief last fall because they had qualified for the bonus. If that bonus had been received in time they would have been able to acquire their seed oats and seed barley before they advanced in price. Seed oats went up ten cents a bushel and barley advanced fifteen to twenty cents a bushel. It would have been a fair relief measure if it had been properly administered.

At this session many problems should be dealt with which would relieve agricultural distress in Saskatchewan. On Friday afternoon the hon. member for Wood Mountain stated that no politics had been played in connection with the distribution of relief in Saskatchewan. I think he was generous enough to say that politics had not been played by any party. He was really funny; that was a joke. Of course, he was addressing himself to the extreme left-hand corner of the chamber, but when he spoke I was reminded of the group that used to sit here to my right from 1930 to 1935. Some hon. members will recall the time when matters pertaining to relief were brought forward by the government of the day; they will remember the opposition and the terrible wails which came from that row.

Let me recall some of them. There was the then hon. member for Assiniboia, who graciously gave up his seat to the Minister of Agriculture. No politics there! Oh, no! But he has a good job now, has he not? Then there was the hon. member for Wood Mountain (Mr. Donnelly), formerly the member for Willow Bunch. He has not been given a job yet, but I think his speech the other evening was a bid for a seat in the other chamber. He has mellowed somewhat, and he may yet be taken care of. Then there was the former hon. member for Yorkton. He was defeated. Where is he now? No politics there, of course! The then hon. member for Weyburn was defeated. Where is he now? And the then hon. member for Humboldt, where is he now? There was the then hon. member for North Battleford; I think we shall hear more of him. There was another hon. member on the government side who was defeated in the last election, the former hon. member for Melfort, who was vociferous in the last house, and I say, sir, that when the people of Canada are demanding national government and that the best brains be brought in to serve the country, to bring that man down here to be a liaison officer between the Minister of National Defence for Air