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Canada. Parl. H. of C. Standing Comm. on Agriculture & Colonization. Minutes of proceedings and evidence.	J 103 H7 1949
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Comm. on Agriculture and
Colonization, 1949, 2d Sess.

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1949
SECOND SESSION
HOUSE OF COMMONS

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
AGRICULTURE
AND
COLONIZATION

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE

Bill No. 185—An Act to Amend the Prairie Farm Assistance
Act, 1939

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1949

WITNESS:

Mr. J. G. Matte, Associate Director, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation and
Assistance Division, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, Ontario.

OTTAWA
EDMOND CLOUTIER, C.M.G., B.A., L.Ph.,
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
CONTROLLER OF STATIONERY
1949

ORDER OF REFERENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, 12th October, 1949.

Resolved,—That the following Members do compose the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization:—*Messrs.* Anderson, Arsenault, Aylesworth, Bater, Bennett, Black (*Chateauguay-Huntingdon-Laprairie*), Blue, Browne (*St. John's West*), Bryce, Catherwood, Cavers, Charlton, Clark, Cloutier, Corry, Côté (*Matapedia-Matane*), Courtemanche, Coyle, Cruickshank, Darroch, Decore, Demers, Diefenbaker, Dumas, Elderkin, Fair, Fontaine, Gauthier (*Lapointe*), George, Gosselin, Gour (*Russell*), Harkness, Hatfield, Herridge, Hetland, Jones, Jutras, Kent, Kickham, Kirk (*Antigonish-Guysborough*), Laing, Lapalme, Leger, Lesage, MacKenzie, McCubbin, McLean (*Huron Perth*), Murray (*Oxford*), Murray (*Cariboo*), Quelch, Richard, (*St. Maurice-Laflèche*), Roberge, Ross (*Souris*), Sinnott, Studer, Thomson, Whitman, Wood, Wright, Wylie—60. (Quorum 20)

Ordered,—That the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization be empowered to examine and inquire into all such matters and things as may be referred to them by the House; and to report from time to time their observations and opinions thereon, with power to send for persons, papers and records.

THURSDAY, 17th November, 1949.

Ordered,—That the following Bill be referred to the said Committee:—

Bill No. 185, An Act to amend The Prairie Farm Assistance Act, 1939.

MONDAY, 21st November, 1949.

Ordered,—That the name of Mr. Argue be substituted for that of Mr. Herridge on the said Committee.

Ordered,—That the said Committee be empowered to sit while the House is sitting.

WEDNESDAY, 23rd November, 1949.

Ordered,—That the said Committee be empowered to print, from day to day, 500 copies in English and 200 copies in French of its minutes of proceedings and evidence, and that Standing Order 64 be suspended in relation thereto.

Attest.

LÉON J. RAYMOND,
Clerk of the House

REPORTS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

WEDNESDAY, November 23, 1949.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization begs leave to present the following as a

FIRST REPORT

Your Committee recommends that it be empowered to print, from day to day, 500 copies in English and 200 copies in French of its minutes of proceedings and evidence, and that Standing Order 64 be suspended in relation thereto.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

A. J. BATER,
Chairman.

WEDNESDAY, November 23, 1949.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization begs leave to present the following as a

SECOND REPORT

Your Committee has considered Bill No. 185, An Act to amend The Prairie Farm Assistance Act, 1939, and has agreed to report it without amendment.

A printed copy of the relevant minutes of proceedings and evidence of the committee is appended.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

A. J. BATER,
Chairman.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY, November 22, 1949.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization met at 11.30 o'clock a.m. The Chairman, Mr. A. J. Bater, presided.

Members present: Messrs. Anderson, Argue, Bater, Bennett, Black (*Chateauguay-Huntingdon-Laprairie*), Blue, Browne (*St. John's West*), Bryce, Catherwood, Cavers, Charlton, Clark, Corry, Coyle, Darroch, Diefenbaker, Dumas, Elderkin, Fair, Gauthier (*Lapointe*), George, Gosselin, Harkness, Hatfield, Hetland, Jones, Jutras, Kent, Kirk (*Antigonish-Guysborough*), Laing, Leger, Lesage, MacKenzie, McCubbin, McLean (*Huron-Perth*), Murray (*Oxford*), Richard (*St. Maurice-Lafleche*), Roberge, Sinnott, Studer, Wood, Wright.

In attendance: Mr. J. G. Matte, Associate Director, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation and Assistance Division, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, Ontario.

The Chairman expressed his appreciation of the honour of having been elected Chairman.

On motion of Mr. George,

Resolved: That the Committee ask leave to print, from day to day, 500 copies in English and 200 copies in French of its minutes of proceedings and evidence.

The Committee considered Bill No. 185, An Act to amend The Prairie Farm Assistance Act, 1939.

Mr. J. G. Matte was called. He made a statement and was questioned thereon.

Clause 1, (Section 7).

Paragraph (a).

Mr. Fair moved that the said paragraph be amended by adding the following: "notwithstanding anything contained in this section, no section of land, having an average of less than eight bushels to the acre, shall be denied the bonus in an eligible township".

And a debate arising thereon, the Chairman ruled the proposed amendment out of order as it imposed a charge upon the Treasury.

Paragraph (a) carried.

Paragraph (b).

Mr. Argue moved that the Committee recommend that Bill 185 be amended by deleting sub-paragraph (b) commencing at line 16 and substituting therefor the following:

(b) Where a section of land lies within an ineligible township and has a side that lies alongside an eligible township or is a section which lies alongside an eligible section or a corner of which touches the corner of an eligible township or an eligible section, such section of land shall be eligible for award as though it were a complete township.

The Chairman ruled that consideration of the proposed motion be deferred until the clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill had been completed.

Paragraph (b) carried.

Paragraph (c).

Mr. Bryce moved that the Bill be amended by deleting from paragraph (c) thereof the words "The Board has determined that an area is eligible for award and", and the words "outside such area".

Debate followed, and, by leave, the proposed amendment was withdrawn.

Paragraph (c) carried.

Clauses 1 and 2 and the Title carried.

Ordered,—That the Bill be reported without amendment.

Mr. Fair moved that the Committee recommended that the Government consider the advisability of amending paragraph (a) of the proposed new section 7 of Clause 1 of Bill No. 185 by adding: "Notwithstanding anything contained in that section, no section of land, having an average of less than eight bushels to the acre, shall be denied the bonus in an eligible township".

And the question being put on the proposed recommendation, it was resolved in the negative on the following division:

Yeas: Argue, Bryce, Charlton, Coyle, Fair, Wright. *Nays*: Bennett, Blue, Corry, Darroch, Dumas, Elderkin, George, Hetland, Jutras, Kent, Laing, Leger, MacKenzie, McCubbin, Murray (*Oxford*), Richard (*St. Maurice-Lafleche*), Roberge, Studer, Wood.

Mr. Argue moved that the Committee recommend that the Government consider the advisability of amending Bill No. 185 by deleting paragraph (b) of the proposed new section 7 of Clause 1, and substituting therefor the following:

(b) Where a section of land lies within an ineligible township and has a side that lies alongside an eligible township or is a section which lies alongside an eligible section or a corner of which touches the corner of an eligible township or an eligible section, such section of land shall be eligible for award as though it were a complete township.

And the question being put on the proposed recommendation, it was resolved in the negative on the following division:

Yeas: Argue, Bryce, Fair, Wright. *Nays*: Bennett, Blue, Corry, Darroch, Dumas, Elderkin, George, Hetland, Jutras, Kent, Laing, Leger, MacKenzie, McCubbin, Murray (*Oxford*), Richard (*St. Maurice-Lafleche*), Roberge, Studer.

The witness was retired.

On motion of Mr. Fair, the committee adjourned at 1.10 o'clock p.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair.

J. G. DUBROY,

Clerk of the Committee.

EVIDENCE

NOVEMBER 22, 1949.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, will you kindly come to order. At the outset I want to thank you for the splendid attendance this morning. May I also take advantage of this moment to thank you one and all for the honour you bestowed upon the Province of Saskatchewan and myself personally in electing me as chairman of this committee. I am very conscious of the fact that I am new and green, both as a member of the House and of this committee, but I can assure you that I will endeavour to discharge my responsibilities to the very best of my ability.

(Routine motions followed)

The CHAIRMAN: Now, gentlemen, I think we should take up the order of reference from the House to this committee which is Bill No. 185, an Act to amend The Prairie Farm Assistance Act, 1939. Many of you are acquainted with the P.F.A. Act and know something about it, and some of you are not so well acquainted with it. Some of us who are here from Saskatchewan and the other prairie provinces have had quite a bit to do with it over the last ten years. There have been previous amendments made to this Act since it was brought into force in 1939, and I think one of the major amendments was made in 1947 when the area was reduced very substantially in order to establish a crop failure area in any of the western provinces. I think, in the Province of Saskatchewan, for instance, we have to have an area of 171 townships in order to qualify for a crop failure area, but that was done away with, at least reduced to 47; and even that is done away with now and I think at the present time it is one township; where there is one township in a municipality affected that is sufficient for the benefits of the Act to come into effect.

Now, as you all know, this bill was brought in the other night by the Honourable Mr. Gardiner, and the two main features of it are that the area has been reduced from a full township to a half township, and that the block in certain sections or areas has been reduced from nine sections to six sections. They are the two major changes in this Bill No. 185.

I might say that in July of 1948 the Western Union of Municipalities met Mr. Gardiner in Regina. I should explain possibly that the Western Union of Municipalities is made up of representatives of the different rural municipal associations of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan; and that there are two representatives from these organizations, or from each organization, which make up what is known as the Committee of the Western Union of Municipalities. We met in July of 1948 in Regina. I had the privilege of being one of the representatives for the Province of Saskatchewan. These particular amendments are two of the amendments that we asked for at that time. This bill does not cover all we asked for, but it has gone a long way in meeting the changes that were asked for by the municipal association. At that time we asked that the area be reduced from a township to a half township, and that the block be reduced from nine sections to six sections. A nine-section block was very difficult to work under. Personally, I think the six-section block will enable the Act to operate with better effect. I do say that these amendments will greatly assist in bringing in more farmers with poor crops and leaving out more farmers with good crops. Personally, I think that is what this bill will do.

Now, the matter is entirely in your hands.

Mr. FAIR: Mr. Chairman, since this legislation was enacted in 1939 it has been found necessary to make several amendments. The minister has been in touch with conditions out there and he has brought in a number of changes since the Act originally went into effect, and the result of them has been to bring the position nearer to what the farmers out there want. In the past we have had quite a number of complaints that an area of one section was too large, and as a result of the recommendations made over the years we have had the eligible area brought down to nine sections out of a township. The amendment which I want to move is as follows: "Notwithstanding anything contained in this section..."—that is section 7(a)—"...no section of land, having an average of less than eight bushels to the acre, shall be denied the bonus in an eligible township."

That is the portion of the Act which says that the area of nine sections with a yield of more than ten bushels shall not be eligible, but if it is found to have a yield which averages less than eight bushels to the acre it can be taken out. In that case it would mean that perhaps six sections would have an average yield of twenty or twenty-four bushels to the acre, but in order to take out these benefits it is only necessary that nine sections be taken out; and in those nine sections there may possibly be two of them which would be eligible for benefit on account of total crop failure. If this clause is passed in the form in which it stands it seems to me that it will be very very unfair. The amendment which I want to add is to section 7(a), which I have read to the committee. That I believe, Mr. Chairman, will remove quite a bit of the discrimination that has been evidenced heretofore in connection with farmers all over the prairie provinces, and I submit that the provision I now propose by way of amendment will be more fair to all farmers concerned.

Mr. WRIGHT: I would like to support the amendment which has just been moved by the member for Battle River. I think the advantage of this amendment will be recognized in that previously there had to be nine sections before this clause came into effect. This amendment reduces that number to six; but still there may be sections within that six-section block where there is a crop failure—that is areas having less than eight bushels to the acre—and this amendment would afford to the farmers living in that area all the benefits of the Act, whereas that would not be possible under the clause as it stands in the bill now before us. I think that this amendment really strengthens the Act and makes it more applicable and makes it a better Act as far as the farmers are concerned in the areas where these sections are being taken out under the Act.

Mr. ARGUE: Mr. Chairman, I think this amendment is very important. It would not change the Act to any appreciable extent whatever. The latest report I have been able to get on this matter from the Bureau of Statistics is that of December, 1948, and that report shows that there were awards made in 2,644 townships, and in that figure there were only 17 part townships excluded from the Act; just 17 part townships excluded during that year. If you take those 17 townships, or nine sections of each one in which there were two or three farmers who had crop failures, they would be deprived of the benefit of this legislation. If there were two or three farmers in each part township you would be taking out some 35 or 40 farmers who had crop failures. So I believe that while the amendment is an important one it will not affect the Act to any great extent; at least it will not change it to any appreciable extent; it would just mean that if a farmer has a crop failure he will be included and will be entitled to get the benefit under the Act.

The CHAIRMAN: Does anyone desire to speak to this amendment?

Mr. LEGER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I might ask Mr. Fair to explain what a section in a township is?

Mr. FAIR: A section is 640 acres.

Mr. LEGER: Then how would you explain one section in a township being a crop failure while the others are not?

Mr. FAIR: Those of us who are from the west will appreciate just what that means. For instance, let us take last year; let us assume that there was a man on one side of the road who had a crop of twenty bushels to the acre while his neighbour, a farmer on the other side of the road, averaged only four or five bushels to the acre on his farm—probably because of late seeding, storm damage or something of the kind—this Act would, of course, not apply to the farmer who got his crop of twenty bushels to the acre, but under the amendment which I have now proposed it would enable the man who had a crop of only four or five bushels to the acre to get the benefits of this Act.

Mr. JUTRAS: As a matter of information, would Mr. Fair tell us to what section his amendment applies?

Mr. FAIR: It applies to section 7(a). My amendment reads: "Notwithstanding anything contained in this section (that is section 7(a)), no section of land having an average of less than eight bushels to the acre shall be denied the bonus in an eligible township."

Mr. JUTRAS: You move that in place of section 7(a)?

Mr. FAIR: No, it is added to section 7(a).

The CHAIRMAN: Your amendment practically takes out all of that.

Mr. FAIR: No, it leaves it all in. The bulk of the lands concerned are areas where a rectangular block of sections of land within an eligible township have an area of not less than one-sixth of the township—and an average yield of more than ten bushels of wheat to the acre; and it provides that a side lies along the boundary of an ineligible area as determined by the board; it says, such part of sections of land shall be ineligible for award. Now, my amendment reads: "Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, no section of land having an average of less than eight bushels to the acre, shall be denied the bonus in an eligible township."

Mr. LESAGE: Where would that come in?

Mr. FAIR: That follows what you have before you in section 7(a).

Mr. LESAGE: That replaces all the section?

Mr. FAIR: No, I am leaving the section as it is, all I want to do is to add this proposed amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: Regardless of the yield?

Mr. FAIR: No, it would have to have below the average yield, below the eight bushels per acre indicated in this bill. As I said before, the main area would be six sections. In that area you might have four sections having a high average yield of let us say twenty-five bushels to the acre and in that same section because of the way in which the land is situated, or for one reason or another, you would have two sections with a yield of only four or five bushels to the acre. I would like such sections to be able to have the benefits of this Act.

Mr. HARKNESS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I take it that the effect of this amendment would be to cut the area which would be eligible down to section blocks. Wouldn't that be the effect of it?

The CHAIRMAN: That is right.

Mr. FAIR: If you had six sections having an average of ten bushels to the acre or over, they would not be eligible; and in the same way, with the Act as it now stands, if there were two or three sections within that block which had a crop failure—that is a crop of four or five bushels to the acre—they would not be eligible. What my amendment seeks to do is to extend to such farmers the benefits of this Act.

Mr. HARKNESS: In other words, you want to get it down to a section basis.

Mr. FAIR: No, not at all.

Mr. JUTRAS: In other words, you are coming back to the same argument every time this question is being discussed; and that is the argument that we should get back to an individual township basis.

Mr. HARKNESS: No, a section basis.

Mr. JUTRAS: Pardon me; yes, on to a section basis. Now, we have gone over those arguments year after year, as a great many of the members sitting around this table will recall. It is just a repetition of the old arguments. That is what the amendment means. In speaking to the amendment I think it was Mr. Argue who said that it did not affect the substance of section (a). That may be so, but it opens up the fundamental and basic question of what the P.F.A. is and what it shall take in. We are asked by this amendment to say that the basis of qualification shall be changed from that of a township to a section. If we are to consider the individual section as a qualification basis, well then we will have to consider the other angle too which goes with it, and that is the question of the award. It has been demonstrated in the past quite clearly, I think, that if we are to go on an individual section basis it becomes to all intents and purposes, and in fact, a group insurance scheme, and regional rates would have to be set in regions where farmers are to qualify. The effect of that would be an increase in the number of regions, the number of sections, which could qualify, and it seems to me only reasonable that if that is going to be done that the awards should be based on a little higher level than they are at the present time. As it is now there are quite a number of regions where they have never qualified so far; particularly on the basis of the Act as it stood prior to 1947. Now, referring to my own province of Manitoba, we have fared very poorly under the P.F.A. Act, possibly with the slight exception of a small area in the south-west corner of the province. In all other parts the Act has not proved to be to us what it has been in either Saskatchewan or Alberta. There is no question of doubt that it has been of great benefit to Saskatchewan, and also of great benefit to Alberta—

Mr. HARKNESS: To the south-eastern part only.

Mr. JUTRAS: Well, generally speaking. I was just glancing at the figures for 1946 and 1947. It has proved to be of 372 per cent benefit for Saskatchewan in 1947, and 225 per cent benefit for Alberta in 1947, as compared to 42 per cent in Manitoba; and, of course, the picture has been the same pretty well all through ever since the inception of the Act in 1937. Well then, as I say, this amendment which appears to be rather innocent in its phraseology raises the whole question again of the basis of the Act, because in the final analysis the township has been reduced now to six sections—from nine sections down to six sections—as the block that can be taken out to allow a township to qualify. This amendment proposes to reduce that area even further. It is really a question now as to whether the government would be prepared to go that far. In the past they have argued that they could not go down to the individual basis without invading the field of provincial rights. You see, it becomes a crop insurance scheme, and it is a provincial responsibility to apply such a scheme; and to deal with it properly you would have to have a channel of communication between the province and the federal cabinet. I think at the very least we should have some information as to the effect of this amendment.

Mr. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I think the honourable member is trying to read more into this amendment than is actually there. I do not think it changes the basis of the Act or that it makes it an insurance scheme, because you still have to have a crop failure area to start with—unless you have your crop failure

area—and on that basis there would not be that danger. This is simply an amendment to prevent the elimination of one or two sections of land in the area which may be affected but may not themselves be directly eligible. What it seems to do is to see that where there is a crop failure in the area the benefits of this Act will be available. The clause of the amending Act which is now before the committee describes a full area, crop failure area. It says in the first place that it must be a township; and then, on that basis, you either have or have not a crop failure area, based on the yield in the township; and this amendment would be a benefit to people in such areas if they have a section of land in that area where the average yield is less than four or five bushels per acre. But you still have to have a township, as provided for by the Act, before such a benefit can be considered.

Mr. HETLAND: Mr. Chairman I do not think we should change it very much; as a matter of fact, I do not think we should change it at all. This is a thing that we have been asking for over the years, and now that we have it here in the form in which it is before us, I think we should accept it.

Mr. BROWNE: It is that or nothing.

Mr. HETLAND: Yes. We do not want to have it considered on an individual basis. Some people in the area may have a crop of twenty bushels to the acre, yet there may be sections right alongside which for all practical purposes have a crop failure. As a matter of fact, you might have forty bushels to the acre on four sections and you might only have eight bushels or less to the acre on some of the others; but where you do have a forty-bushel crop on four sections you could not have an average for the half section which would bring it below eight bushels to the acre.

Mr. FAIR: Oh yes, you could.

Mr. HETLAND: But that is not my argument. My argument is this, that we do not want to spoil things. After all, the cost of this is being borne by the people of Canada as a whole. We have to have the co-operation of the whole of Canada; and in the whole of Canada we are the only ones who get any benefit. I think we have a good thing here and I don't think we should lose it. If we have a few sections that have a poor crop there are inspectors going around and they would no doubt report it; but I do not think we would be justified in expecting them when they are going around to pick out every individual farm where they have a poor crop, a crop failure. I think we should keep it the way it is, the way that is proposed in the clause now before us. I think the matter should be left entirely the way it is, because this thing has been worked out. After all, a section is not a very big area.

Mr. LEGER: Mr. Chairman, as a matter of information, how much land is there in a section?

The CHAIRMAN: A section is 640 acres.

Mr. LEGER: And the majority of farmers have one section or more?

Mr. HETLAND: That is right. I do not think we should spoil this. I think it is good the way it is. I do not think we need to have inspectors going all over the country.

Mr. LEGER: Can you tell us how many farmers have a section of land or more?

Mr. HETLAND: I do not want to argue that at the moment; but I will say this, that three-quarters of a section make a fair farm.

Mr. LEGER: Do most farmers have more than one section?

Mr. HETLAND: Yes, I would say that they have more than one section. However, that is not the argument; it is this, that these inspectors are not going

to try to find a section or a part of a section. I do not think they could do that. I think we should accept this. That is my opinion.

Mr. WRIGHT: Just to reply to the honourable member for Humboldt (Mr. Hetland), that it would require a lot more inspectors; I do not believe that it would require any more inspectors than we have at the present time, as far as I have been able to determine. They have to make individual assessments at the present time of each section. What is required is not an increase in staff there, because we do have all the machinery we need for inspection; you have to have it for every township anyway. Therefore that argument does not stand up. I just wanted to get that point across to the committee; it would not mean any more inspectors than we have at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN: I think I will ask Mr. Matte, of the department, to explain to the committee how this works out.

G. J. Matte, Associate Director, P.F.R.A., called:

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Mr. Chairman, would you have that amendment read again before Mr. Matte explains it, because we have not got a copy of it.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment to Section 7(a) reads:

Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, no section of land having an average of less than eight bushels to the acre shall be denied the bonus in an eligible township."

That is the amendment and I shall now ask Mr. Matte to say a few words about it.

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, possibly I should explain our experience with the Board of Review in studying cases where this would apply. It might be of assistance to you. In the last Board of Review we went through nearly three hundred townships and found only three cases where we took out of payment a block of six sections. And we also studied the effects of this amendment in our discussions at the Board of Review, and we found that in those three cases, those three blocks of sections we took out, there was only one farmer with a yield of less than eight bushels, and his yield was, I think, seven bushels. When the amendment was first proposed, instead of more than ten bushels per acre, it was proposed to have in there eight. We believe that if we leave it at eight, you will be taking out of payment somebody who has got five or six; whereas, if you make it more than eight, you will be taking out of payment people who have less than seven bushels per acre. So there would be very, very few go out of payment on this basis of reducing it from nine to six sections—people having less than eight bushels per acre.

By Mr. Diefenbaker:

Q. Can you give us a concrete example? It is difficult to follow it unless you take a concrete example of a township.—A. Yes. First of all, you have a township with an average yield of let us say between zero and four bushels, in the whole township. In studying the yield in each point, first of all, there are six sections or more where the yield may be more than ten bushels. If either group of farmers is in a rectangular area, we take them out of payment; but we use the ten bushels rather than the eight bushels in this case, because it will not take those fellows out of payment who have only six or seven. Do not forget that their blocks are pretty small. Before, it was nine, now it is six. There have been very, very few who would come out of payment who have less than eight bushels on this basis.

By Mr. Argue:

Q. Is that an example based on fourteen bushels per acre?—A. No; it is based on ten bushels; and if you added this amendment, you would have to change from ten, under 7(a), to eight. There would be no use in having it ten, because anybody with eight would be receiving payments, or anybody with less than eight.

By Mr. Fair:

Q. Even with a six section block?—A. Yes.

By Mr. Argue:

Q. The amendment would still allow a farmer with a nine bushel crop within a six section block to get the bonus. Surely that would not change the Act very much. You have all the information needed. The survey is all done; and it is just a matter of looking within those few blocks to see if there would be the odd farmer with less than eight bushels.—A. In our experience we find there is just the odd farmer, and he would hardly have less than six or seven.

By Mr. Leger:

Q. With this amendment as proposed, would it increase the rate of expenditure by the government?—A. Oh yes, it would.

By Mr. Browne:

Q. I come from a section where this Act does not apply. So might I trespass on the time of the committee by asking if this gentleman from the department could explain simply what it all means, because I am afraid there are a lot of us here who do not understand it. There are several here from Newfoundland. I have a little sketch here. Is that something like it?—A. Six by six.

Q. Thirty-six square miles?—A. Here is your township, six by six. The average of the township is less than eight bushels per acre. If you can find a block of six sections or, let us say, three by two or one by six, where the average yield is more than ten bushels per acre in the whole block, then you take that out of payment. Everybody else gets paid.

Q. What it really means is; for the wheat which is growing in only one large rectangle in that township.—A. That is it.

Q. And the rest, therefore, cannot have got much wheat, and therefore they are entitled to compensation.—A. That is right.

Q. What is the effect of this amendment?—A. That is: if any one of the farmers who were taken out of payment has less than eight bushels, he would receive payment just as anyone else.

Q. What would be the difference between a man, for example, with a section in that rectangle, and a man who is two sections away from it, but with the same yield? Do you say that one man would get compensation while the other man would not?—A. That is right.

Mr. CHARLTON: In this first section 7, it reads: “. . . one-sixth of the township and side that lies along the boundary of an ineligible area. . .”

The CHAIRMAN: That is (b).

Mr. CHARLTON: No, it is section 7 (a).

By Mr. Charlton:

Q. Supposing you were going to take an area of six sections out as not being eligible. Then that sixth section area would have to border upon an ineligible

area. That means if those six sections were in the center of the township, and vice versa, as in sub-section (c), if those six sections were not in the centre of a township, they could not be added?—A. Sub-section (b) you mean.

Q. Sub-section (b); no, that is right.—A. It has two borders. It has to be contiguous to an area; and under (a) it has got to be contiguous to an ineligible area. It has got to be on the edge of a township.

Q. So the chap who is on the edge of a township is just out of luck?—A. No.

Q. If he is not in an eligible township, then he cannot?—A. That is right. If it is an eligible township, that is right.

Q. On a total crop failure, he could not get payment?—A. That is right.

Mr. GEORGE: It seems to me that the effect of this amendment would be to put it on an individual basis. Those of you who are from the Maritimes will know that in the Bay of Fundy we run into this same problem, and that part of the Prairie Farm Assistance Act has been made applicable to certain areas in the Maritimes. The only difference is that there we are trying to get rid of water instead of getting water. But we are not allowed to work on an individual basis. So it seems to me that if we are going to pass this and allow individual claims, we ought to have the right to do the same thing in the Maritimes. But I do not think it would work in the east.

Mr. LAING: This would be a matter for the provincial governments.

Mr. FAIR: A few minutes ago, Mr. Hetland said that this is a contribution by the people of Canada as a whole. I do not believe that is correct, because farmers contribute one per cent of all grain checks received for the grain they sell. While some farmers may contribute for ten years—I know in my own case I have contributed for eight years and been paid once—let us say \$300 every two years, the remainder is made up by the country as a whole.

Mr. LAING: The intent of the Act is to provide compensation for the results of agriculture. I have an idea that the opening up of it this way is probably going to extend compensation to some who might be guilty of the misuse of land. I believe there is that tendency. I think we should get away from the usual basis of an act of God in declining rain to one area and get to a basis where a man should not be slovenly, should he wish to be.

Mr. FAIR: I would not practice improper farming methods just for the sake of getting a payment of \$1.50 per acre.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: First, Mr. Chairman, may I, as one among a number of members from Saskatchewan but the only member of my party, congratulate you, sir, on your being chosen as chairman of this very important committee. I am very happy at this point to extend to you my warmest and most sincere congratulations. And now, sir, having done that, I would like to say that I speak for a constituency which has, over the years—and Mr. Matte will agree with me—suffered in certain parts continuing drought. Payments under the Prairie Farm Assistance Act have meant a great deal to us in that constituency. I believe this is a matter that one can deal with without any feeling of partisanship. And it is in that spirit that I shall ask Mr. Matte a number of questions.

By Mr. Diefenbaker:

Q. I would like to know whether this amendment, insofar as 7-a is concerned, that is, the bill, represents the general consensus of opinion among the rural municipalities in Saskatchewan that have been particularly affected by the anomalies which have arisen in recent years in that part of the townships which have had a fair crop, and in other parts which have had no crop, yet where, because of the averaging-up, no payments have been made? May I mention, Mr. Matte, two areas which I know. I would like to know how this would operate in their case. For example, along the Qu'Appelle valley, on the north side of the Qu'Appelle valley between Elbow and Lumsden, there has been

little or no crop. Nevertheless, in the township which runs across the valley, on the other side of the valley, there has always, over the years, been a good crop. Would this section 7-a pretty well cover the complaints in those three or four municipalities along the Qu'Appelle valley? Mr. Matte will realize that there have been quite strong complaints raised. The people have not been able to leave and they have had to remain there over the years and have never been able to get any payments.

I would like also to know whether Mr. Matte has a summary of the points raised by the rural municipalities as to the amendment in connection with qualification clauses. I am not going to deal with them now, but I have communicated with all the rural municipalities in my constituency and secured from them their suggestions. I would say, so far as 7-a is concerned, generally speaking, as I look over them: they ask for a reduction in the eligible townships from nine sections to six sections, which actually is being done. They have also asked for an increase in the amount per acre. I feel sure that Mr. Matte will have received a number of requests in that direction. And there is one further representation which they have made which I would like to place before you. The final one is that there should be producer representation on the Board of Review.

What I have placed before you represents the consensus of opinion among the municipalities which are peculiarly affected by this legislation. I am not clear as to Mr. Fair's amendment and I do not want to be misunderstood in what I shall say; but I wonder whether or not that amendment can be passed by this committee. I would like to hear more about it in that connection. I would support it if it were within our power, but I do not want to support an amendment that, under the rules, is one that we cannot properly recommend. I am not raising that as a point, but I am saying that it may be a popular thing to take the stand of supporting it, and I know it would be, but I do not believe in taking a stand on matters which I, personally, realize that we have not the power to deal with. However, if we do have that power, I shall support it; but I am not, just for the sake of a vote, going to support a sub-amendment which is not within our powers. So I would like clarification in that regard.

Then there is just one other matter I would like to bring to the attention of Mr. Matte. I am sure it applies to all the members in the areas affected. It arises under this section. I would like to know how many complaints have been made regarding 1949 awards under the Prairie Farm Assistance Act and also in how many areas in 1949 reinspection has taken place; and I would also like to know whether or not in the case of reinspection consideration should not be given to allowing the municipalities within the areas which are affected to be consulted and to be made aware of the fact that reinspection is taking place.

I know of one place where considerable objection was raised because the municipality was not made aware of the reinspection. Now, I think I have covered the various matters upon which I wanted to secure enlightenment; so I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling upon Mr. Matte, I would like to read the following.

Mr. ARGUE: I suppose this is on a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. The suggestion was made by Mr. Diefenbaker that we might not have the power to do certain things. I would like to read into the records paragraph No. 674 from Beauchesne's parliamentary rules and forms, third edition 1943. The paragraph reads as follows:—

No. 674. The Committee cannot agree to any clauses involving payments out of the public funds, or imposing any tax or charge upon the people unless such clauses have been previously considered by resolutions in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I would like to say on a point of order that this committee, of course, just recommends changes or amendments to the House with respect to the bill. I think we have a precedent to the amendment which was moved by the member for Battle River in the fact that last year in the Veterans Affairs Committee—I think quite a few members here will remember that committee—last year there was a motion by Mr. Herridge to increase the pensions and it was accepted by the committee and voted on and recommended to the House. That point was similar to the points we are proposing, and it was accepted by the government.

I think this committee has the same power as the Veterans Affairs committee last year to recommend to the government. I think that is all we can do. We cannot do more than recommend a change. The purpose for the bill being sent to this committee is, mainly, to have recommendations made. But whether or not those recommendations be followed or accepted by the government is entirely up to the government itself. They would have to deal with the recommendations from this committee.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: If a recommendation could be made, I would support it.

The CHAIRMAN: A recommendation could possibly be made as a separate clause after we have dealt with this bill. But I think this amendment would be out of order. I think the amendment along the lines of Mr. Wright's suggestion, should we wish to recommend certain things, might be in order after we have dealt with this bill.

Mr. JUTRAS: I think that was the procedure followed last year in the Veterans Affairs committee with a recommendation which involved the expenditure of money. If I recall rightly, it was not part of the recommendation or the report of the committee. There were other recommendations which came from the committee apart from and outside of the official report of the committee. I think according to the rules Mr. Diefenbaker is correct. The practice has always been that the committee as such does not deal with anything which involves the expenditure of money. But a precedent or an exception was made in the case of the Veterans Affairs committee and it was agreed that once the report was considered then certain recommendations were offered by the committee as an addendum to the report. I think that was the procedure followed.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: That is the reason I brought it up. I want to support the amendment and the recommendation as suggested by the member from Melfort. I think it does meet the situation and that it ought to be brought to the attention of the House. And even if there are only three cases which Mr. Matte can refer to, nevertheless if this principle were in effect, there would be, I think, a great many more cases then brought to his attention than there were when the law was not in effect.

Mr. CLARK: First of all, Mr. Chairman, I would like to congratulate you on being elected as chairman of this Committee. I had the pleasure of nominating you. I come from eastern Canada and I carry a lot of good wishes to you in your new position.

I think the member for Humboldt has brought up a point in his remarks which should be thought over very sincerely by this committee. This is a committee for all of Canada, eastern, western, and northern. It takes in the whole area. Speaking as a farmer from eastern Canada, I want to do all that I can to help the farmers of western Canada in any difficulties they may have. But I think it is wise perhaps, upon an occasion like this, that we mention some of the difficulties in eastern Canada so that the members from Western Canada will realize that Eastern Canada does have difficulties which are serious. We hope that they will take such matters into consideration when they ask for concessions from a committee such as this.

Our problem in eastern Canada, as one of the members has mentioned, is that of too much water. That is just the opposite to your problem in western Canada. And I would like to point out that a farmer in eastern Canada who has one hundred acres of land, in order to ensure, or partly ensure a crop, must spend at least \$80 an acre for tile and drainage material in order to ensure a reasonable crop year after year. In other words, he must spend \$8,000 on a hundred acre farm to give him the assurance of a crop.

I have listened to the speeches of the members from the west and I feel most sympathetic towards them. I want to be helpful and to support the principles which are suggested by the amendment. But as I have said, I think it is wise that something like this be mentioned at this time so that the members from western Canada may have some appreciation of the problems with which the eastern farmers are faced. That is the only reason I brought the matter up. We want to support irrigation schemes which help to develop and ensure crops in western Canada. But it may be that at some time you may be asked to help the eastern farmers solve their problem of too much water rather than not enough.

In eastern Canada we have many areas in many townships where the farmers have to pay \$80 an acre; and there are many places where the farmer has practically no crop at all and has no protection under a scheme such as this. I just want to bring that up so that those of you who are from western Canada will appreciate that we too have some of those problems; but we want to help you and we want to support the scheme; and I am sure that the eastern Canadian members all want to do the same. But, as I have said, we have a problem, that of too much water.

I hope that no one from western Canada will think that I am in any way opposed to this amendment. But I would appreciate it if you would consider this as a particularly Canadian problem and that you are making your request of all Canada. I hope I am not out of order in making these remarks. I hope that they will be helpful to the committee in the future.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Clark.

Mr. FAIR: I find myself in sympathy with Mr. Clark in his remarks. As a member who has been here for a long time—this is my fifteenth year—I have yet to hear a successful contradiction to the statement that the west has always given every consideration to the problems of the farmers all over Canada. And as far as I am concerned I believe all my friends from the west have met with this condition here. As far as this amendment is concerned I shall be quite satisfied if the committee sends it to the House as a recommendation. I might say that many of the farmers of the west today consider the payment of a bonus as a grocery bonus, because many of them lost practically everything they had in crop failures.

The WITNESS: Mr. Diefenbaker is not with us now, but I shall endeavour to answer his question. Firstly, in regard to the municipalities along the Qu'Appelle valley, I think I can say that this amendment will certainly help to a great extent the situation which has been causing some trouble there in years past. In the past it had to be a section of nine, three by three, rectangular. It said rectangular; but in order to be rectangular, there had to be sections three by three. But now under the new situation it brings it down to six. That can be three by two or one by six. That would be better than taking it out of one by nine, but it is going to reduce it considerably. Now, another thing I was going to say here—mind you I am not going to give you any advice on it—but what I was going to say was that as I see the situation it is this: A principle is involved there: are you going to go down to the individual farm, or are you going to continue on the basis on which the Act is already drawn up. I think we must assume that the proposed amendment—I am not speaking against it,

mind you—I think we must assume that the proposed amendment will bring into effect the application of this Act to the individual farmer in so far as taking out a payment under section 7 (a) is concerned. I think that is one of the key arguments there; you are going to bring the individual farmer into play under this section. Now, as regards the other questions asked by Mr. Diefenbaker, Mr. Bater has put the completer answer to that; that is as regards the recommendation of the Association of Municipalities of Western Canada. I think this amendment meets their recommendations, I mean the recommendations made by the Association of Rural Municipalities. It goes no further. It just goes that far. I think that is what they recommended, was it not, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. BROWNE: What associations are you referring to now?

The CHAIRMAN: It brings the unit area down from a township to half a township, and that is one of the things which the Union of Municipalities asked for.

Mr. SINNOTT: I will move the adoption of section (a) of section 7 immediately.

The CHAIRMAN: I have ruled the amendment out of order.

Mr. ARGUE: I understand that it can still be submitted as a recommendation.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, but it will have to be reworded; the wording is not correct as it stands. At the moment I am ruling the amendment out of order.

Mr. McCUBBIN: You rule it out of order?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. ARGUE: But you rule that it may be taken up later in the form of a recommendation?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. ARGUE: It would be in order at a later stage?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. If you wish to make it in the form of a recommendation after we have disposed of this bill it will be considered. I think the amendment as it was introduced was entirely out of order.

Now, gentlemen, we will take up subsection (b) It reads:

(b) where a rectangular block of sections of land within an eligible township having an area of not less than one-sixth of the township and a side that lies along the boundary of an eligible township is determined by the Board to have an average yield of eight bushels of wheat or less per acre, such block of sections of land shall be eligible for award as though it were a complete township;

Mr. ARGUE: Mr. Chairman, with respect to subsection (b), that would reduce the area as to size which would be eligible for benefit that can be included in an eligible township, provided this area is of a size sufficient to meet the needs of the section. The same argument to some extent applies to (b) as applied to (a). It is highly possible and quite probable that in these six sections that are being added to the eligible township you may have one or more farmers who have an average yield of higher than eight bushels to the acre so that they cannot obtain the bonus, whereas in an area outside of the bonus section you may have, and you are very likely to have, a number of farmers who have a yield under eight bushels and it just so happens that you cannot tie them into a rectangular block of six sections in order to provide them with the benefits. I have an amendment to section (b) and it is worded in the form of a recommendation, and I would like to read the amendment to you, Mr. Chairman, and after you hear it you can make your ruling whichever way you think best.

Moved by myself: that the committee recommend that Bill 185 be amended by deleting subparagraph (b) commencing at line 16 and substituting therefor the following:—

- (b) Where a section of land lies within an ineligible township and has a side that lies alongside an eligible township or is a section which lies alongside an eligible section or a corner of which touches the corner of an eligible township or an eligible section, such section of land shall be eligible for award as though it were a complete township.

The effect of this recommendation, if the committee approves or recommends it, would mean that after you have established an area as crop failure, you can do so where you have a township or a half township; and this means that you can add to that township or half township sections of land outside that township or half township, providing the crop in that area is less than eight bushels per acre. This in my opinion would not have the result which was alleged would follow from the first amendment. This would not place the scheme on an individual farm basis at all. This does not refer to the individual farmers in any way. It talks of sections of land, of many sections of land. You will have more than one farm. As has been pointed out before, when the Act was first brought in years ago we started with a crop failure area of 171 townships in Saskatchewan, and that was reduced to one township in an area, and that again was reduced down to one-half a township. I am not arguing that the basis of award be reduced, but that if there is an area which has been established as a crop failure area that other sections contiguous to that crop failure area may be added.

The CHAIRMAN: You want the area reduced now to one section, I think that is what you said.

Mr. ARGUE: That is right.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid that I have to rule that out of order just the same as the other.

Mr. ARGUE: This is a recommendation though, in this instance.

The CHAIRMAN: I admit that; but in so far as dealing with clause (b) is concerned, I would say that the recommendation is out of order. You are cutting your six sections down to one section.

Mr. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I must dispute your point of order. It is up to this committee, not up to the chairman, to say whether a recommendation of this committee goes to the house or not. I appreciate your position, Mr. Chairman, and I congratulate you upon having taken that position; but I still say that the fact that you are chairman does not give you the authority to stop this committee from recommending something to the house if they feel that such a recommendation should be made. It is for the committee as a whole to decide in its judgment as to whether we recommend something to the house or not. I do not think you are in order, Mr. Chairman, in refusing to accept a recommendation; it is up to the committee itself to decide what shall be done with it.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Wright, just a moment please. Do not for a moment think that I am refusing to accept anything. That is not what I am doing at all. What I am doing is this: I am saying that with respect to clause (b), which is now before the committee, that this amendment, moved by the member for Assiniboia, is out of order in so far as clause (b) of this bill is concerned. I am not saying that after we have disposed of clause (b) and the bill it could not be brought forward as a recommendation for the consideration of the committee; far from it.

Mr. ARGUE: You mean that it would be in order at a later stage?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes; I would say so. Yes.

Shall clause (b) carry?

Carried.

Shall clause (c) carry?

Mr. BRYCE: No, Mr. Chairman; I want to move an amendment which I hope will be in order. May I just speak to it. It says here:

(c) where the Board has determined that an area is eligible for award and a rectangular block of sections of land outside such area having an area of not less than one-half a township is determined by the Board to have an average yield of eight bushels of wheat or less per acre, such block of sections of land shall be eligible for award as though it were a complete township.

Now, my motion is this:—

Moved by myself:

That Bill 185 be amended by deleting from sub-paragraph (c) thereof the words “the Board has determined that an area is eligible for award and” and also by deleting from the same sub-paragraph the words “outside such area”.

and then the clause would read:

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid that I am going to have to refuse this amendment on the same grounds as I refused the other amendment. What you are saying now is that you want the half township, as stated here, cut down—

Mr. BRYCE: Oh no, definitely not.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, excuse me.

Mr. BRYCE: Definitely not.

The CHAIRMAN: Your amendment reads:

That Bill 185 be amended by deleting from sub-paragraph (c) thereof the words “the Board has determined that an area is eligible for award and” and also by deleting from the same sub-paragraph the words “outside such area”.

You have left out the half township again.

Mr. BRYCE: No. It says, by deleting from sub-paragraph (c) thereof the following words, “the Board has determined that an area is eligible for award and”; and also by deleting from the same sub-paragraph the words “outside such area”; and then it would read:

(c) where a rectangular block of sections of land having an area of not less than one-half a township is determined by the Board to have an average yield of eight bushels of wheat or less per acre, such block of sections of land shall be eligible for award as though it were a complete township.

What this amendment is doing, Mr. Chairman, is that in the case of these half townships the half townships can be added to by six-section blocks the same as though they have been a part of the township itself. Now, it is my understanding from the minister that this was the intention of the Act; that wherever a half township was established as an area then it could be added to by these six-section blocks, but under the section as it now reads I do not think that could be done.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall ask Mr. Matte to explain it.

By Mr. Wright:

Q. That is all we were hoping to do under this amendment; to make it quite clear that in any case where a half township was established that half township could be used as an area to which to add the sixth section block.—A. It does under the present wording. It reads:

. . . such block of sections of land shall be eligible for award as though it were a complete township;

In other words, you can add to it the same as you could to a township. And I might say that this matter was discussed with the Justice Department when it was drawn up.

By Mr. Argue:

Q. In order for a half township to be established, first of all to be established as a township under the Act, there must be another area which is declared an eligible area. But actually this might never occur. Do you think it might?—A. It would never occur.

Q. It is possibly theoretical at least. And you do not have only a half township with a crop failure. You do not have just a half township; and that half township would not get any of this whatever. According to this clause, there has to be one township which is eligible. And after you get one township, you look around for a half township. Then you mean that you look for a half township first? Let us suppose there was a township in the Peace River area which was eligible. Then, could a half township somewhere near Winnipeg get the thing?—A. Absolutely.

Q. That is the point which we wanted to clear up. We thought there could be no objection to this amendment as it is worded, because it would merely say what we understood the minister had to say to us in the House.

By Mr. Jutras:

Q. Mr. Chairman, could Mr. Matte further elucidate on this point: what is the exact relationship there of the first sentence with the rest of it:

(c) where the Board has determined that an area is eligible for award and a rectangular block of sections of land outside such area. . . .

A. It means anywhere at all outside of the area where there is at least one township which comes into payment under the Act. You can take a half township and an area anywhere else in the western provinces into payment providing it is an area of at least half a township.

Q. Do you mean to say that the only requirement is that the half township must not be the only area qualifying?—A. That is right.

Q. Taking the three provinces together?—A. No, the four; the Peace River area and northern British Columbia.

By Mr. Bryce:

Q. In the constituency of Selkirk at Poplar Point, if we have a crop failure there could the hon. member for Provencher—although there are one hundred miles between us—benefit?—A. Absolutely. There is no difference there.

By Mr. Jutras:

Q. So long as there is a township somewhere, anywhere in the three western provinces and the Peace River district, then the half township anywhere in the other parts can qualify?—A. That is right.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall (c) carry?

Carried.

By Mr. Wright:

Q. In the case of the three western provinces or the Peace River block that half township could qualify irrespective of whether there was a township anywhere else?—A. Yes. We have discussed this matter thoroughly. Yet. And for all practical purposes, knowing that at all times there will always be, at least, one township in the western provinces where there will be a crop failure; taking that basis, really the effect of this amendment, the effect of this bill, is to reduce the area from a township to a half township. That is the general effect of it.

The CHAIRMAN: Carried?

Mr. JUTRAS: What about section (c)?

Carried.

Mr. FAIR: I should like to move, seconded by Mr. Wright—

Mr. JUTRAS: Oh, we have not dealt with 2, yet.

Mr. McCUBBIN: Yes. No. 2 is carried.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall the title carry?

Carried.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall we report the bill?

Carried.

Mr. FAIR: Before reporting the bill, I should like to move, seconded by Mr. Wright, that this committee recommend to the House that section 7(a) be amended by adding the words:

Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, no section of land, having an average of less than eight bushels to the acre, shall be denied the bonus in an eligible township.

The CHAIRMAN: No section. You have reduced it to a section now?

Mr. FAIR: No. That is exactly the same as the amendment I moved before.

The CHAIRMAN: Now I will repeat it to the committee. Will you just read it again, Mr. Fair?

Mr. FAIR:

Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, no section of land, having an average of less than eight bushels to the acre, shall be denied the bonus in an eligible township.

Mr. JUTRAS: Now the suggestion before the committee from Mr. Fair would in fact recommend an amendment to section (a). Then later on an amendment by Mr. Argue would in effect make the same recommendation to section (b). Are you going to press it? Will Mr. Bryce do so? Then the principle involved in both is the same. So I would suggest that it might be preferable if the two gentlemen would get together and make a general recommendation to the department drawing their attention to the one particular problem which is common in the two amendments, with the idea in view that they might find a better solution to it, that they might accomplish what we are attempting to accomplish now by restricting it to (a) and (b). I think that would be preferable to presenting a formal amendment or a restriction.

Why not make a general recommendation that the government or the department consider the advisability of some such wording; as further studying the Act with a view to eliminating discriminations as such of that nature, discriminations with regard to individual sections? I think that would better accomplish your aim and it would leave more flexibility to the department because, in the end, that is what we all want to accomplish in this amendment.

Now, we recognize that this bill which is before us is not all we had hoped for. I referred previously to the question of bringing it down to an individual

basis, one that would be rather in the nature of a crop insurance scheme. Of course I have a great deal of sympathy with a scheme for crop insurance, but that is entirely outside our scope today. For us to recommend anything of that nature, we would have to begin by recommending to the government that they consider it jointly with the provinces, before this problem can be tackled. I think we might possibly include here a general resolution further to study the possibilities of eliminating discriminations in the Act, and leave it at that.

Mr. LEGER: I believe, Mr. Chairman, that you said a little while ago that this bill incorporated the recommendations made by the farmers in the town of Humboldt.

The CHAIRMAN: Two of the main features, yes. I said that.

Mr. LEGER: I believe that the government at the present time is very lenient in granting the demands of the western farmers? But perhaps it would be a good thing to review the situation we have in the maritime provinces. In the maritime provinces, in order to grow anything, we have to buy fertilizer and, naturally, we have to make use of all the barnyard manure that we can get. This year in my district we have had a crop failure on account of drought. We had lots of rain in the early part of the season, but for the last month and a half, in a time when we ordinarily would have intermittent rain, we did not have any rain at all. I would have you know that we in the maritimes, especially in New Brunswick, grow grain too. We also had a number of crop failures where we never had any assistance at all. I believe that the government is reviewing the situation of the western farmer with considerable sympathy and I do not think at the present time that we should ask for any increase in benefits.

The CHAIRMAN: Does anyone else wish to speak to this amendment?

Mr. BROWNE: Could you tell us what the increase in cost would be if we took in the individual section as is suggested?

The WITNESS: I could give you just a rough estimate. It would certainly increase the payment considerably if you go down to the individual unit.

Mr. CHARLTON: Mr. Chairman, I am probably rather stupid, but I cannot possibly see where a man under that recommendation could be declared ineligible if outside of an eligible township. I think the wording should be "ineligible township" instead of "eligible" as in Mr. Fair's recommendation. I would like to have an opinion from Mr. Matte on that. I believe that under the proposed amendment a man could not possibly be declared ineligible for the bonus.

The WITNESS: He refers to a section based on an eligible township, he must be adjacent to an eligible township for award.

Mr. CHARLTON: If this section were contiguous to an eligible township he would automatically become eligible for the bonus, would he not?

The WITNESS: No, not if he were included in a block such as we have been speaking about. What we are doing here is this, we are taking out of that eligible township a block of sections, out of payment, where the average is over ten bushels per acre.

Mr. CHARLTON: Then it should be as I have suggested.

The CHAIRMAN: Might I ask the sponsors of this recommendation if they would accept the suggestion which Mr. Jutras has made?

Mr. FAIR: Mr. Chairman, we have the representatives of the provinces here who are familiar with these matters and I would be quite satisfied if the matter were left for them to bring in a recommendation.

Mr. JUTRAS: I am rather interested in this and I have a very definite concern in these matters. In my view the recommendation is restrictive in character. For instance, in my own constituency, we have more than one river lot, a large area of the district is made up of river lots, settlement lots; and if you put it that way we will run into the very same difficulty that we ran into at the

beginning of the Act in 1937. We finally got the department to accept certain changes representing river lots, but this does not take into consideration river lots at all, they would be left out of the benefit. I suggest that you leave this matter to the department because I think you can assume that the department will do it. Your amendment could be redrafted in general terms, and perhaps in that way meet some of our problems. As it stands it would be too restrictive in that it would not apply to many of the districts in Manitoba.

Mr. FAIR: You have referred to the river problem; that was taken care of in the amendment of 1947.

Mr. JUTRAS: The problem was taken care of as far as the Act is concerned because it was revised so that it would take care of our situation; but there is no such thing, for instance, as a river lot, in the recommendation before us, and there is nothing in the Act which says that river lots shall be taken care of in so far as determining townships goes. It takes care of them in that respect, but it does not go any further than that.

Mr. ARGUE: Would there be under the Act now in respect to whole or part townships?

Mr. JUTRAS: As I say, they can be grouped now, the department can group a certain number of river lots and call that a township.

Mr. BROWNE: It is one o'clock, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. JUTRAS: You still have that difficulty in this recommendation of yours; it still does not take care of the fraction of a township, for instance.

Mr. FAIR: Then I suggest that Mr. Jutras bring in a proposed recommendation at the next sitting of the committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there anybody else who would like to speak to this recommendation? I would like to put it to the committee and have it disposed of. You have heard Mr. Fair read it to the committee. Do you wish to have it read again?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: It reads:—

Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, no section of land, having an average of less than eight bushels to the acre, shall be denied the bonus in an eligible township.

Mr. FAIR: Mr Chairman, I should like to have the vote recorded?

(Vote recorded.)

The CHAIRMAN: Is there anything that anyone else wishes to bring forward?

Mr. ARGUE: I would like to move that the committee recommend that Bill 185 be amended by deleting sub-paragraph (b) commencing at line 16 and substituting therefor the following:

(b) Where a section of land lies within an ineligible township and has a side that lies alongside an eligible township or is a section which lies alongside an eligible section or a corner of which touches the corners of an eligible township or an eligible section, such section of land shall be eligible for award as though it were a complete township.

I know the committee is anxious to rise and, as I have already given an explanation of my motion, I have nothing further to say.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall Mr. Argue's motion carry?

(Motion lost.)

Mr. ARGUE: Mr. Chairman, I should like the vote recorded.

(Vote recorded.)

The committee adjourned.



