

available for some people unless there were some appropriate way of distributing them? These commodities would be hoarded by the wealthiest people to the prejudice of farmers and working men. It is only by an appropriate legal mechanism that the distribution can be made equitable. Are hon. members of the opposition really anxious to get rid of all the legal provisions adopted in order to take care of the national emergency arising out of the war? We have seen hon. members of the opposition speaking against the resolution but voting to bring it before the committee of the whole. If they were against it, it seems to me that that was the proper time to vote against it. Is it not indubitably clear that the Progressive Conservative party has a twofold view on this problem. Probably the Progressive group favours some controls, while the old Conservative group prefers the controls already exercised by finance and would rather have legislation of that kind defeated. We have only to refer to the *Ottawa Morning Journal*, edition of March 28, 1947:

The resolutions committee of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada last night gave the final touches to resolutions which will be presented at the annual meeting opening today, and it was learned that a great deal of argument developed among members during a two-day sitting. A resolution on government controls, for instance, is said to have engendered a wide difference of opinion. The old-line Conservatives wanted a resolution which would put the party on record as demanding that all controls be dropped forthwith. The Progressive element favoured a resolution supporting controls on rent, foreign exchange and essential goods. It was also learned that the question of housing caused a temporary split, with some desiring houses for medium income people and others wanting the government to keep out of housing altogether.

Mr. FLEMING: That is just newspaper conjecture.

Mr. MARQUIS: It is a good Conservative newspaper. It is obvious that the party has no control over the newspaper, and it is also obvious that the division of opinion among hon. members brought to an end the three-day filibuster against the government's present legislation. But before closing the debate on the resolution, the hon. member for Stanstead (Mr. Hackett), in an atomic outburst of eloquence, challenged the rural representatives of the province of Quebec to stand up and declare that their people favour controls.

Conscious that this electoral appeal could not improve the conditions of the farmers and labourers of Canada, I did not hesitate to answer that the farmers and workingmen of my constituency were ready to accept those controls which are necessary to protect them against the abuses of capitalists.

Mr. Speaker, I was born and brought up and I worked on a farm. I remember too well those years when the farmers were obliged to accept ridiculous prices for their products and the working men received famine wages, and during that period of time there was no such scarcity of commodities as at the present time. When I was elected as a member of this house I pledged myself to advocate any sound policy which would put the farmers and the labourers of my country on the same level as any other classes with respect to prices and the distribution of commodities.

In the present emergency period, if there were no legislation to guarantee fair prices for farm products and to prevent the disproportionate price increase of manufactured products, the farmers would again have to suffer from the discrepancy between their sales and their purchases. Under the circumstances is it not the duty of the government to secure for Canadian citizens an equitable distribution of essential commodities, the scarcity of which is well recognized? In fact, no control has to be maintained on those commodities available in the country and the whole world.

When dealing with this point we have to consider some commodities such as sugar, which is apportioned through an international allocation committee, so that the quantity of sugar allotted to this country in 1947 amounts to ninety-three pounds per capita, which is supposed to take care of the industrial and domestic needs of the people. In order that each family shall get its share, it is necessary that a just and fair distribution should be made. If such allotments were not made, what would happen? A few wealthy and powerful firms would immediately buy the whole quantity of sugar and themselves determine the prices, which could reach a peak inaccessible to farmers and labourers, and God knows that farmers and labourers with large families vitally need that commodity. In assuring an equitable distribution, the government does more than protecting the economy of those families; it does take care of national health. Some people say that a certain quantity of sugar was sold on the black market, which means that somebody infringes the law in subtracting sugar from the whole quantity and reselling it at an illegal price. This objection is not a serious one. If a relatively small quantity of sugar is sold in contravention of the law, what would be the situation in this particular matter when capitalists would exercise control and be free to sell that commodity at thirty, forty or fifty cents a pound? It would mean that black market