

*Supply—Agriculture*

**Mr. Blackmore:** Mr. Chairman, up to the present we have had an exceedingly valuable discussion on the minister's first item, and much information of tremendous value to those interested in Canadian agriculture has been put on the record. I wish to congratulate all those who have taken part in this debate up to the present time, although it seems to me that in the main we have devoted ourselves to telling what are the troubles throughout the country and how badly off we are, and have paid very little attention to what might constitute solutions to the problems which face us.

We must realize that the agricultural industry is not in a static position. Times are changing with almost bewildering speed, so that a method of farming or even a type of farming—for example, dairy farming—which might have been a great success 20 years ago might prove to be a complete failure today. In the case of dairy farming, this might be brought about by the coming in of margarine. That is merely an illustration.

A farm might have supported a family with great success in the days when horses were used, when machinery was more or less elementary—in many cases a farmer could make his own machinery—when a farmer raised the fuel he required; but a similar farm might be a total failure today though the farmer might be just as skilful and just as hard-working as was the farmer 20 years ago. I think we as a nation must do some serious thinking to find the way out of the difficulties that face us here in Canada. I was much impressed with the speech of the hon. member for Queens, because he pictured a condition which will develop in a good many Canadian provinces before too long unless we find a solution for our problems.

May I take a look at the picture of Canadian agriculture as a whole during the moments which I will feel free to use tonight. I wish it to be known that I am not speaking for the Social Credit group or the Social Credit movement. By that I mean that the things I say or the suggestions I may offer may not be just what the Social Credit movement would approve of officially as being what it would advocate. What I am going to say is based on the way I figure we can get out of our difficulties, having in mind the Social Credit proposals which we have advocated in this house and which very soon will have to be given much more attention than they have been given in years past, because of the very difficulties with which we are confronted.

[Mr. Gardiner.]

It will be my aim to list several of what I consider to be the main dangers to Canadian agriculture, and then suggest several measures which I believe are necessary to remove them or to safeguard us against those dangers, and indicate by what means we may enable ourselves to take these measures.

Canadian agriculture today is confronted with serious dangers; of these may I refer to six. In the first place there is the danger from United States competition. Enough has been said already by hon. members speaking on the floor of this house to indicate how much more dangerous United States competition becomes every few months to Canadian farmers. We must not have the idea that our Canadian farmers are not in open competition with the farmers of the United States, for they are; not only in Canada but all over the world.

The second danger is of Canada herself becoming burdened with unwieldy surpluses in a manner similar to that which has brought the United States into surplus difficulties and is threatening to keep them there.

Third, there is the danger of deplorable conditions prevailing in agriculture with the likelihood of a serious deterioration in our source of food supply, as has been clearly indicated by the hon. member for Queens.

Fourth, there is the danger to the nation's economy from a depression in the agricultural communities. Just as an example, here is an illustration right up to date. Recently James S. Duncan, of the agricultural machine manufacturing industry, indicated that they were laying off 890 men in their manufacturing concerns on Friday, June 3. The reason was that there was not the demand for agricultural machinery, a type of production in which they specialize. Now, 890 men is a great number of men.

**Mr. Pouliot:** May I ask a question of the hon. gentleman?

**Mr. Blackmore:** Yes.

**Mr. Pouliot:** Is it not because the sale of agricultural implements had reached the saturation point?

**Mr. Blackmore:** The hon. member for Temiscouata raises a question which should be answered. My own opinion is that it is not so. One of my main reasons for saying what I say is this. The kind of machinery used on larger farms, particularly those in the west, is changing with very great speed. For example, at least every 10 or 12 years you will find farmers working with a different kind of machine, one more adapted to do the work better, and that sort of thing, and farmers